

## U.S. ambassador, Senator visit Sidon-wounded

SIDON (AFP) — The U.S. ambassador to Lebanon, Richard Jones, accompanied by visiting U.S. Senator Robert Kerrey, visited the bedside of people wounded in the shelling of Sidon this week by an Israeli-backed militia. Mr. Jones and Mr. Kerrey were accompanied on their hospital tour in this southern port city by Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Mr. Kerrey, a senior member of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, said he was "very sorry for the loss of civilian life and the wounded." "The U.S. will do all it can to stop this," said Mr. Kerrey, a Democrat from Nebraska, who arrived from Syria on a tour of the region. "In Jerusalem and Sidon, it is the civilians who paid the price." Six civilians, including a baby and two children, were killed and 38 other people wounded when the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) fired several rounds of shells into Sidon.

# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation  
جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية، الراي

## U.S. citizens warned about travelling or residing in Israel

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. citizens travelling or residing in Israel should exercise caution in shopping areas and pedestrian areas, which have become the targets of terrorist attacks, according to the State Department. A statement from the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv and consulate general in Jerusalem released Friday by the State Department said "recently attacks have shifted to pedestrian centres and shopping centres." U.S. citizens should "exercise caution in high traffic or crowded pedestrian areas, particularly in Jerusalem." In the announcement, U.S. citizens were advised to avoid large crowds and political demonstrations, and not remain in an area where a spontaneous gathering occurs.

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## Government says Adasieh dam planned and paid for by Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan announced Saturday that it intends to build a diversion dam at Adasieh, a point located between Jordanian and Israeli territories in order to divert its own share of the water of the Yarmouk River to the King Abdullah Canal.

An official Jordanian spokesman, who was quoted but not identified by name by the Jordan News Agency Petra, said "plans and designs for the construction of the dam together with the tender documents have been prepared and funded by Jordan, according to the provisions of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty."

The spokesman was responding to media reports that said Israel will be building a dam on the Yarmouk River at the Himmeh district and that an agreement was reached on the project with Jordan, Petra said. In this context, the agency quoted him as saying: "The Jordanian government, while expressing total astonishment at these reports, points to the provisions of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty and reaffirms its commitment to implement its articles in a manner that will by no means infringe on the rights

or interests of any third party, a commitment that was originally made by the two sides to the treaty."

The spokesman concluded by saying: "The Jordanian government stresses that it had not entered any negotiations or reached agreements that may affect bilateral negotiations between Israel and any Arab party, nor will it do so in the future."

The spokesman did not specifically cite any particular media report, but he appeared to be referring to an article carried by Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz on Friday, which said the Israeli government had decided to build the dam in territory claimed by Syria. The report said the decision was taken by National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, who reversed the policy of late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to implement the project within the "Green Line," the pre-1967 boundary between Israel and Jordan.

The Ha'aretz report, written by Ze'ev Schiff, claimed that Mr. Sharon consulted with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu before making the decision to build the dam, which will trap the waters of the Yarmouk River

in the former demilitarised zone (DMZ) of Al Himmeh. Prior to yesterday's official government statement Jordanian officials were saying privately that Jordan "would never raise a topic with the Israelis that may in any way affect or touch upon any interest of Syria, the Palestinians or any other party."

The dam's construction is stipulated in an annex to the Israel-Jordan treaty of 1994. It states that the two countries will cooperate on building a dam to trap and divert the water of the Yarmouk river near Adasieh. The dam is meant to store water before it is channelled into the King Abdullah Canal.

"The Jordanian reaction to Sharon's plan initially favoured Syria's claim to the land," the Ha'aretz report contended, quoting Jordanian officials as saying that the area in question was not Israeli territory.

"Amman later said that if Israel remained adamant it would seek compensation for the expenses it had incurred in planning the dam at the previous site. This was taken in some (Israeli) quarters to mean that Jordan would be willing to revise its original approach to the

Sharon plan," the Ha'aretz report claimed.

"Netanyahu apparently backed (Sharon's) idea. It is thought that Rabin had wanted to retain the former DMZ intact to enhance Israeli manoeuvrability in case of a proposal to exchange territory with the Syrians," Mr. Schiff wrote. "Rabin was determined to distance the Syrians from the northeast shore of the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee), even if this entailed an agreement to trade territory."

Meanwhile the Arab League slammed the Israeli project to build the dam on territory claimed by Syria as a new "provocation" to the Arab World by Israel, AFP reported from Cairo on Saturday.

Arab League Deputy Chief Mohammad Zakariya Ismail said the project "is a new provocation and a new form of blackmail by Israel."

"Israel's current policy, which is to defy U.N. Security Council resolutions and the terms of reference of the peace process, is doomed to failure," he said.

Mr. Ismail said the dam project was also aimed at driving a wedge between Syria and Jordan, but that Israel would fail in its goal.

## Israeli planes blast south Lebanon after fierce fighting with Hizbollah

TYRE (AFP) — Israeli forces launched a series of air and artillery strikes against Hizbollah strongholds in south Lebanon Saturday after fierce fighting in which both sides claimed to have inflicted casualties.

Hizbollah said its guerrillas killed five Israeli soldiers and wounded seven others in a string of attacks on the so-called "security zone" in south Lebanon.

Israel's proxy militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), reported the deaths of at least one guerrilla in exchanges of fire in the occupied zone.

There was no independent confirmation of any casualties in the fighting, which came at the end of one of the worst weeks of violence in south Lebanon since an April 1996 ceasefire.

Meanwhile, a member of the pro-Syrian Amal movement, which carries out attacks against the Israeli-occupied zone, was killed by a bomb placed in his car in Beirut.

Khalil Mussawi died instantly in the blast, police said. He ran the local Amal branch in the south Lebanese village of Arzun.

In the south, Israeli warplanes fired six missiles at hills and valleys around the south Lebanese village of Yater in a one-hour onslaught, sending a huge black cloud of smoke rising above the area, a Hizbollah stronghold.

At the same time, Israeli artillery gunners based in the occupied zone rained 250 shells on the area around Yater and three other villages lying just north of the zone, security sources said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties in the air raids, which came in retaliation for a string of Hizbollah attacks in the occupied zone.

A Hizbollah spokesman in Beirut said the Israeli onslaught was aimed at freeing soldiers he said were trapped by guerrillas near Yater.

"Israel is trying to get its soldiers out by unleashing this hysterical bombardment," the spokesman said.

The first Hizbollah attack came during the night, when guerrillas fired mortar shells at Israeli troops and SAM-7 rockets at an Israeli helicopter which came to rescue them.

At dawn Saturday, guerril-

las fired mortar shells at army positions at Blat and Rahrah in the "security zone," security sources said.

The sounds of the fighting could be clearly heard by a five-nation committee monitoring the 1996 ceasefire in south Lebanon, which was meeting for the fourth straight day Saturday to discuss violations of the truce accord.

The panel, which groups Israel, Lebanon, the U.S., France and Syria, is discussing 10 complaints from Lebanon and Israel after a week of violence in which 11 civilians have been killed and 47 wounded in south Lebanon and one person injured in northern Israel.

The flare-up began Monday when a roadside bombing killed the teenage son and daughter of a former SLA officer in Jezzine, an SLA-controlled enclave.

The SLA responded by shelling the southern port city of Sidon the same day, killing six civilians and wounding 38 others.

Hizbollah guerrillas then fired more than 50 rockets into northern Israel Tuesday.

The Israeli and Lebanese representatives on the ceasefire committee are disputing blame for the attacks, a source close to the Lebanese delegation said. The marathon meeting was likely to continue until at least Saturday evening.

The panel is meeting at a U.N. base in the border town of Naqoura, some 20 kilometres from Yater.

## Minister injured, driver dies in Beirut car blast

BEIRUT (R) — A bomb exploded in central Beirut Saturday, killing the driver of a Lebanese minister and seriously wounding a military official of the Amal movement, security sources said.

They said the driver of Social Affairs Minister Ayoub Hmayed was killed instantly when a bomb in the trunk of his car blew up as another man, Khalil Mussawi, tried to open a door.

Mr. Mussawi, a south Lebanon military commander of the pro-Syrian Amal movement, was seriously wounded. The sources had earlier identified him as a passerby.

Mr. Hmayed is a senior political official of Amal — the group led by Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri. The Amal movement, Lebanon's mainstream Shiite group, has maintained a military arm in south

Lebanon that frequently attacks Israeli forces occupying the so-called security zone.

Hizbollah, the pro-Iranian group, is the main force fighting the Israeli occupation.

Witnesses said the minister's driver had just arrived from south Lebanon when the bomb exploded as he was exiting the car. He was driving his own car, not the minister's.

Ambulances rushed to the scene in the crowded Khandak Al Ghamiq section of the capital. Firefighters sprayed the destroyed car and police sealed the area to question witnesses.

The blast shattered windows of nearby buildings and sent a chilling reminder to Beirutis of the dark days of the 1975-90 civil war when car bombings and fighting were part of daily life.

## Amal statement blames Israel

BEIRUT (R) — Amal blamed Israel for the explosion which killed Khalil Mussawi, an Amal military official who died of his wounds. An Amal official told Reuters that Israel "bears the responsibility for the explosion in the car of Khalil Mussawi." There was no immediate reaction from Israel to Amal's accusations. An Amal statement condemned Israel for the blast and said the group's militiamen would continue attacking Israeli forces and their local militia allies in retaliation.

## Palestinians protest Bethlehem siege, clash with Israeli troops

### Combined agency dispatches

PROTESTING ISRAEL'S three-week siege of this Biblical city, Palestinians on Saturday threw stones and bottles at Israeli troops who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets.

"The Israeli government should know that we as a nation will never be humiliated," said a 19-year-old stone thrower, his face masked by a white T-shirt. "They will lift the closure or we will burn the ground underneath their feet."

About 60,000 residents of Bethlehem have been barred from leaving their town since two suicide bombers blew themselves up in a Jerusalem market, killing 14 bystanders.

Israel reportedly suspects that the masterminds of the blast, leading figures of the Hamas group, are hiding in Bethlehem, just eight kilometres south of Jerusalem.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat predicted Saturday that relations with Israel would deteriorate further.

"The worst is yet to come," Mr. Arafat told Palestinian journalists in the West Bank town of Ramallah. In a veiled threat of violence, he said the Palestinians' options were open, but would not say what those options were. "No one reveals their cards," he said.

After the Jerusalem bombing, Israel imposed a blanket closure on the West Bank and Gaza, barring all Palestinians, including 100,000 labourers, from entering Israel. It also enforced an internal closure, preventing Palestinians from leaving their towns and villages.

The internal closure has gradually been lifted, and only the Bethlehem area remains under siege. Last month, Palestinian security forces uncovered a

Hamas bomb factory in the town of Beit Sahour near Bethlehem. There have been conflicting reports in the Israeli media on whether the explosives found in Beit Sahour were of the same type as those used in the market bombing.

In retaliation to the bombing, Israel also withheld millions of dollars in tax refunds it owes the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). It has since released some of the money. However, Israeli leaders were infuriated this week when Mr. Arafat held two days of meetings with opposition groups, including Hamas leaders, in a carefully staged show of Palestinian unity.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suggested that the remaining funds would not be transferred until Mr. Arafat arrested large numbers of Islamists.

Mr. Arafat on Saturday lashed out at Israel for withholding the money. "This is robbery... why this injustice and humiliation? Because the target is the peace process," Mr. Arafat said.

Mr. Arafat said Israel was punishing the Palestinians without cause, saying he believed the two suicide bombers came from abroad, and not from areas under his control.

Despite Mr. Arafat's tough words, a statement released Friday night, after the weekly Palestinian cabinet meeting, said the security cooperation between Israel, the PNA and the U.S. would continue.

In the Bethlehem protest Saturday, some 300 Palestinians marched from the centre of town to Rachel's Tomb, an Israeli enclave in the city that is guarded by Israeli troops.

Some 150 Palestinians threw stones and empty bottles at the soldiers who fired tear gas and rubber

## King orders medical aid to Palestinians

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday called upon the concerned authorities to deliver instant medical aid to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) areas. Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi made a phonecall to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to inquire about the PNA's needs.

Carrying signs reading "Israeli terrorism is killing Palestinian people" and "Free our prisoners," the protest was led by 30 members of Fateh, masked with checkered kouffiyehs who also burned an Israeli flag.

Palestinian police wearing gas masks looked on but did not intervene. No injuries were reported.

Bethlehem's acting mayor, Hanna Nasser, who participated in the march, but not in the stone-throwing, said the siege was choking his city which is largely dependent on tourism.

Some tourist buses have been allowed to come in, but individual tourists have been turned away at Israeli army roadblocks.

"We're holding a peaceful demonstration to show resentment for the closure of Bethlehem, our most important Christian city that has been closed for 23 days," business owner Nicholas Kanawati told

Agence France Presse.

The town's Nativity Square at the site where Christians believe Jesus was born was deserted and only a handful of tourists ventured into the area by foot, their buses prevented by Israeli soldiers from passing the checkpoint from Jerusalem.

"Our economy has hit rock bottom," Mr. Kanawati added. "I'm in the souvenir business and since the closure my business is down to five per cent."

A U.S. embassy official said recently that Palestinian income was down 40 per cent since the PNA began to take control of the areas in May 1994.

Also Saturday, some 150,000 students who study at U.N. schools in Palestinian refugee camps in the Gaza Strip, staged a strike to protest a decision by the organisation to charge some tuition (see story on page 2).

## Israel to deport Jordanian employed by PNA

FUAD ISMAIL, a Jordanian employed by the Palestinian National Authority as the chief military prosecutor for the Ramallah region, will be deported to Jordan early next week. Mr. Ismail was arrested Wednesday by policemen at the Al-Ram junction roadblock after it was discovered that he had no permit to enter Jerusalem. In addition, the serial number of the gun found in his possession did not match the number written on his weapon permit. During the investigation police discovered that the entry visa stamped on his Jordanian passport was no longer valid. According to police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby, Ismail had renewed his visa several times, but had been in the country for at least 18 months without renewing it. Mr. Ben-Ruby said that Ismail was remanded by Jerusalem Magistrate's Court until Sunday, when a date for his deportation would be set — The Jerusalem Post



CHIEF JUDGE SWORN IN: The newly appointed President of the Higher Court of Justice Farouq Kilani was sworn in Saturday before His Majesty King Hussein at the Royal Court in the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the Chief Chamberlain, and Minister of Justice Riyad Shakaa. Mr. Kilani was former Chief Justice of the Court of First Instance. He is a graduate of the Cairo University School of Law and has written several books on penal procedures. Mr. Kilani has been in private practice for the last several years.

## Yemen to take action to protect tourists — press

SANAA (R) — The Yemeni authorities have decided to introduce new measures to protect tourists after a spate of kidnappings of foreigners that threatened the Arab country's tourist industry, an official newspaper said.

The 26th of September newspaper said officials from the ministries of interior, tourism and culture decided at meetings held in recent days to enforce "stiff punishments" against kidnappers and bolster security measures in tourist attraction areas.

"The meetings were aimed at adopting new measures to protect tourists in Yemen," the weekly newspaper, the official publication of the Yemeni armed forces, wrote in its latest edition which hit the news stands on Thursday night. It gave no further details.

Yemen has blamed foreign-backed saboteurs for a spate of kidnappings of foreigners to sour the country's international relations. Some

officials had said opposition groups receiving Saudi financial help were responsible for the abductions.

Ten Italian tourists were freed last Friday after being abducted by local tribesmen in separate incidents, the latest in a series of abductions in recent years that targeted European tourists. Western diplomats and a Saudi ambassador.

The tribesmen have tried to use hostages as bargaining chips in disputes with the government and foreign oil firms. All hostages have so far been released unharmed.

Cash-strapped Yemen is rich in archaeological sites which attract scores of tourists mainly from Europe. About 75,000 tourists visited Yemen in 1996 generating about \$50 million in revenues.

Yemen, a small independent oil producer, depends heavily on foreign aid mainly from Europe and other Western donors.



A firefighter sprays a car in central Beirut after a bomb exploded in the trunk of the vehicle on Saturday, killing the driver of Lebanon's pro-Syrian social affairs minister and seriously wounding a southern military official of the Shiite Amal militia (Reuters photo)



# Iraq completes first section of south-north gas pipeline

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq has completed construction of the first section of a gas pipeline to link its southern and northern fields, Al Jumhuriya newspaper quoted an oil ministry official as saying Saturday.

"We have completed the first phase of the project to connect the centres of production in the south and the north through a gas pipeline," the ministry's research and planning director, Saleh Hassan Al Khayyat, said.

The completed section links the southern Iraqi field of Nassiriya to Musayib, 80 kilometres

south of Baghdad, covering nearly 200 kilometres, he said.

The pipeline will then travel another 300 kilometres to the northern fields, and then be extended to consumption centres such as power and petrochemical plants, he added. "The gas surplus will be exported," he said.

Iraq first drew up a plan for a national gas grid in the 1980s, planning to extend it further to Turkey.

Baghdad and Ankara last year signed a preliminary accord to build a \$2.5 billion gas pipeline to link the northern Iraqi fields to the

Turkish port of Ceyhan, on the Mediterranean.

Iraq's total gas reserves, nearly three quarters of which are associated with oil, are estimated officially at 3.1 trillion cubic metres. They lie in the northeast and the south of the country.

Before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, in August 1990, Iraq used to export 11.3 million cubic metres of gas to Kuwait, through a pipeline built in 1987.

Mr. Khayyat said Iraq plans to build a gas export terminal in Khor Al Zubair, on the Gulf, as well as facilities to reinject gas into oil

fields in order to increase their pressure and boost recovery.

Iraq, which has the world's second largest oil reserves after Saudi Arabia, seeks to raise its crude output to six million barrels per day from the current level of 2.5 million b/d.

Baghdad this year signed agreements with Russian oil companies to develop fields in southern Iraq, but they can only be implemented after the lifting of the oil embargo imposed by the U.N. on Iraq since August 1990.



An Iraqi woman buys Syrian made soap Saturday from a street vendor at the Shorja bazaar of Baghdad. Syrian products are popular in this sanction hit country after the U.N. has authorised Iraq to import goods through its border with Syria as part of a deal allowing it to sell limited amount of oil to finance purchase of food and medical supplies. Iraq invited Syria to forge close ties in the face of the growing military cooperation between Israel and Turkey (AFP photo)

## Families struggling as Palestinian schools reopen

GAZA (R) — The Palestinian school year began on Saturday with many families struggling to make ends meet under a U.N. money crunch and the economic effects of Israel's border closure.

Israel sealed off the Gaza Strip and the West Bank after a July 30 double suicide bombing at a Jerusalem market which killed two bombers and 14 other people.

The closure means massive disruption of the Palestinian economy, with tens of thousands prevented from going to their jobs in Israel.

Some families have also been knocked by the introduction by the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) of a \$14 fee for children studying in its schools.

Parents say the sum is too large a burden for people barred from their jobs.

Popular committees in Palestinian refugee camps

called a boycott of UNRWA schools to protest the fee decision. In Gaza, attendance at UNRWA schools was light.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) called for students to attend classes at all schools, while attention was given to the issue, and around 300,000 Palestinian children in the Gaza Strip and 500,000 in the West Bank attended classes.

"We're discussing the matter with (UNRWA Commissioner Peter) Hansen," Palestinian President Yasser Arafat told reporters.

"He's facing a budget deficit, but we've started with him contacting (international) donors to cover up the deficit," UNRWA said it was

compelled by a financial crisis "to impose mandatory school donations in the Gaza Strip agency's schools in order to continue to provide reasonable educational services."

It exempted orphans and severe hardship cases from the fee.

U.N. officials were unavailable for comment on the financial problems on Saturday.

The Palestinian authority has begun a boycott of non-essential Israeli goods in retaliation for the closure, which Israel says it will only lift when Mr. Arafat cracks down on militants.

The authority banned imports of 15 categories of Israeli products including canned goods, fruits, vegetables, juice, biscuits, toilet paper and cigarettes.

Mr. Arafat, whose security officials are cooperating in trilateral talks with their Israeli and U.S. counterparts, has rejected as an unacceptable "dictate" the Israeli demand for mass arrests.

## Kuwaiti minister heads to Turkey

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait's commerce and industry minister, Jassem Mudhaf, left for Turkey Saturday heading a trade delegation attending an international fair in Izmir, the Kuwait news agency KUNA said.

Mr. Mudhaf told the official news agency that he will hold talks with his Turkish counterpart and other government officials during his visit to discuss ways of boosting economic links.

This year's fair at Izmir is being held between August 23 and 27, KUNA said.

Kuwait has several economic pacts with Turkey, including agreements aimed at encouraging and protecting investment and avoiding double taxation.

## Iraq's Uday invites Syria to forge alliance against Israel and Turkey

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq and Syria should forge closer ties in the face of the growing military cooperation between Israel and Turkey, a newspaper run by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday said Saturday.

"The way things are evolving between Iraq and Syria is positive," said the Babel daily newspaper. "What would be better is the reestablishment of diplomatic ties and cooperation between Iraq and Syria to confront the Israeli-Turkey alliance and Israel's insistence on occupying the

Golan," seized from Syria in 1967. Closer ties between Syria and Iraq "would be beneficial for all Arabs," Babel said.

Arab states have condemned flourishing Israeli-Turkish military ties, which they believe is targeted at Syria. Meanwhile, a 12-member Syrian trade delegation began meeting Iraqi company executives and trade ministry officials on Saturday to clinch a wheat export contract to Iraq, a government spokesman in Baghdad said.

The delegation, led by the director of the Syrian union

of chambers of commerce Mohammad Malki, discussed bilateral cooperation with Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammed Mahdi Saleh.

Mr. Saleh told reporters that Iraq has recently signed a deal with Syria to import foodstuff via the Syrian Mediterranean port of Tartus, in the north.

The U.N. has authorised Iraq to import goods through its border with Syria as part of a deal allowing it to sell limited amounts of oil to finance purchases of food and medical supplies.

Iraq and Syria, ruled by rival branches of the Baath Arab Socialist Party, broke off ties in 1980 and closed their border two years later.

However, relations warmed in the past three months after Syrian businessmen travelled to Baghdad to break the ice.

The two countries have also signed contracts with each other for the first time since 1980. The Iraqi-Syrian border reopened in June to businessmen. Traders and industrialists from the two countries have since exchanged several visits.

## Israel, Croatia establish ties

From The Jerusalem Post

AFTER HOLDING secret talks in Budapest, Israel and Croatia have announced Thursday the establishment of diplomatic ties.

In its statement issued Thursday Croatia apologised "for crimes committed against the Jewish people during the Nazi period" and by the Croatian regime at that time.

"Fascism, racial hatred, xenophobia and anti-Semitism are abhorrent and are condemned by the democratic government and people of the Republic of Croatia," added the statement, signed by Hrvolje Sarinic, head of the Office of the President of the Republic of Croatia.

Israel was represented by Eitan Bentsur, the Foreign Ministry's director-general. He expressed "great interest" in Croatia's achievement of independence in addition to "the importance which the people of Croatia today attach to values of freedom and democracy."

Croatia's President Franjo Tudjman also plans a visit to Israel to apologise personally for crimes perpe-

trated by some of his people during the Holocaust, the Foreign Ministry said.

Several months back Israel was cool to Zagreb's feelers for forging ties after Tudjman published a book called "Horrors of War" which contained quotes deemed anti-Semitic.

A revised edition has been published omitting the offensive passages, Croatia's statement said.

Tudjman has expressed interest in building close cooperation with Israel in the fields of defence and industry.

from the Egyptian tourist spot of Taba, just across the border, the radio said.

He stopped his drive north to pick up the hitchhiking couple in Eilat. Hunter got in the front seat. Gibb went to the back.

Okef said that when he pulled over for a rest stop later in Israel's southern desert, he and Hunter first got out and had a cigarette. Gibb joined them later.

Okef described the night sky to the two, discussing the big dipper constellation.

At this stage in the reenactment, Okef suddenly went to the car and returned with a toy gun, the radio said. He pretended to shoot two policemen who were playing Gibb and Hunter's roles.

"I know that there were shots, the gun was in my

## Israeli army reserve officer reenacts killing of British tourist

TEL AVIV (R) — An Israeli army reserve major Saturday reenacted the killing of a British tourist and the wounding of the man's girlfriend in front of police cameras.

Israeli Danny Okef, 45, confessed Friday that he killed Jeffrey Hunter, 22, and wounded his girlfriend Charlotte Gibb, 20, on August 13 in Israel's southern desert. Police said.

Okef could give no motive, saying he might have a split personality.

During Saturday's reenactment, an Israeli Radio reporter who witnessed it quoted Okef as saying he was discussing the stars in the night sky when he suddenly shot the two.

Okef said that on August 13 he had come to Israel's Red Sea resort town of Eilat

hand. I know that there was shooting and I know that I hit them because they fell down," the radio reporter quoted Okef as saying.

"I don't remember how many shots were fired but I remember after the shooting that I stood with the gun in my hand and I looked at myself. I know that I shot them because there was no one else there other than myself."

Okef told reporters at court Friday, "I really don't know what happened... Maybe I need a doctor for split personalities. I really don't know how to explain myself, after I saw them lying there then I realised what happened."

Hunter's father, Norman, said he learned of Friday's arrest while visiting Gibb who is recovering at hospital in Cambridge.

"I'm just pleased that they've got him. They worked very quickly," Hunter told Israel's army radio Friday.

"My wife said just feel sorry for him. He can't even explain himself why he did it, so it's something very, very sad. It's very sad that something has gone wrong with his mind and he's just done something that he can't explain," Mr. Hunter said.

Gibb, a student from Peterborough in eastern England, told reporters after the shooting: "We were just having a cigarette outside the car, during a rest from the journey, and then I just saw lots of flashes and he'd shot us. There was silence, we weren't really speaking, and then I just

saw the light."

Minutes after the shooting, soldiers found Gibb beside the road and administered first aid. Hunter, a law student from Surrey south of London, died instantly.

Police said their first break in the case came Monday when an officer who had manned one of the roadblocks set up after the shooting remembered seeing a Peugeot 309 that belonged to Okef, who worked for a transport company.

They said a gun registered to Okef fitted the murder weapon and that one of Hunter's fingerprints was found in his vehicle. Police arrested Okef at his hometown of Even Yehuda in central Israel Friday morning.

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### JORDAN TELEVISION

TEL 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:10 .....Cartoons

15:00 .....Energy Express

16:00 .....American Chart Show

18:00 .....French Programmes

19:00 .....News in French

19:30 .....News Headlines

19:35 .....Fresh Prince of Belair

20:00 .....Cinema, Cinema, Cinema

20:30 .....National Geographic

21:10 .....Renegade

22:00 .....News in English

22:30 .....One West Waikiki

23:15 .....Sisters

### PRAYER TIMES

04:38 .....Fajr

06:00 .....(Sunrise) Duha

12:38 .....Dhuhr

16:16 .....Asr

19:16 .....Maghreb

20:38 .....Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatfeh Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

### ARMENIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 688404

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Moderate summer weather conditions will prevail with winds north-westerly moderate. In Agaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

### Min/Max. temp.

Amman .....19/31

Agaba .....25/39

Deserts .....17/34

Jordan Valley .....24/38

Yesterday's high temperatures:

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Tawfiq Qub'ain .....623029

Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh .....736011

Dr. Hisham Kan'an .....790286

Dr. Khalidoun Asfour .....699440

Firas pharmacy .....661912

Ferdows pharmacy .....778336

Al Asema pharmacy .....637055

Nairokh pharmacy .....623672

Al Salam pharmacy .....636730

Yacoub pharmacy .....644945

Shmeisani pharmacy .....637660

Najib pharmacy .....847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir .....276852

Al Quds pharmacy .....---

ZARQA:

Dr. Akram Haddad .....985550

Khalifeh pharmacy .....985417

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### Min/Max. temp.

Amman .....19/31

Agaba .....25/39

Deserts .....17/34

Jordan Valley .....24/38

Yesterday's high temperatures:

### ARMENIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 688404

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

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By Amy Henderson

Social in the Jordan Times

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## Jordan rejects proposed reductions in UNRWA services — Tarshihi

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Kingdom of Jordan Saturday said it rejects any reduction of the social, health, and educational services offered to refugees by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in its fields of operations and urged donor nations to contribute more to help meet the agency's estimated \$26 million deficit for the 1997 fiscal year.

Voicing Jordan's views, Mr. Ibrahim Tarshihi, director general of the Department of Palestinian Affairs, said that "Jordan does not accept any reduction of any of UNRWA's services and refuses to place any additional burdens on the Palestinian refugees who continue to face very difficult living conditions."

Mr. Tarshihi was commenting on media reports that UNRWA plans to impose tuition fees on refugee children in Gaza and possibly fees on other services for Palestinians in its five fields of operations, which include Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.

"The Jordanian government intends to coordinate with the other Arab states hosting refugees on this issue and to raise this question during the scheduled Sept. 9 meeting in Amman by representatives of the host countries and the



Ibrahim Tarshihi

donor nations which provide financial assistance to UNRWA in order to ensure that the agency does not make any cuts in its services," Mr. Tarshihi was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Appealing to the donor nations to fulfil their commitments and help meet the deficit in UNRWA's budget, Mr. Tarshihi said the agency has already notified Jordan and the other host countries about its intention to cut services so that it can pursue its main operations until the end of 1997.

According to Mr. Tarshihi, the cuts could include freezing the appointment of 249 teachers at its schools, making reductions in health services, and reducing the international staff by 15 per cent, a measure to which

the Arab host countries do not object because of the staff's high salaries which they feel would better serve the refugees.

The Sept. 9 meeting in Amman is being organised to discuss recent developments in the agency's endeavour to eliminate the present deficit.

The meeting will be a follow-up to one held last June, during which donors contributed \$4.1 million to UNRWA's 1997 \$352 million budget.

UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen last week met Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Gaza and told him that UNRWA is compelled to introduce cuts and reductions for the last quarter of 1997 due to the lack of funds.

For its part, UNRWA said Saturday that it has not yet received definite instructions by Mr. Hansen to impose any fees on refugee children's education in the coming year, stating that the schools are only collecting contributions from the students for the maintenance of services.

UNRWA sources said that preparations have been completed for the start of the 1997-1998 school year.

## Minister says election participation dialogue to continue next week

AMMAN (J.T.) — The dialogue between the government and opposition political parties is continuing as the two sides have agreed to resume meetings next week, according to Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi Saturday.

Speaking after the regular Cabinet session, Dr. Mutawi told reporters that the dialogue will be open and free to be attended by the various parties.

The government has so far concluded two meetings within the dialogue, but according to the head of the Muslim Brotherhood group, Abdul Majid Thuneibat, although last Tuesday's meeting did not produce any definite agreements, the government has given assurances that there will be no preconditions to the dialogue and that all issues are open for discussion.

A local press report Saturday quoted Munir Sharaiba, a spokesperson for the Jordan Democratic People's Unity Party, as saying Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali will today meet representatives of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the Ba'ath Progressive Party, the Jordan Democratic People's Unity Party, and the Arab Land Party.

Quoted by the daily Al Arab Al Yawm, the spokesperson said the five parties will submit a nine-point list of demands to the prime minister as a condition of their participation in the general elections and will participate if their demands are met.

Not included in their demands was the scrapping of the one-person, one-vote election system, though they demanded that the

government work out a modern election law to be approved by Parliament.

In reply to a question by reporters about contacts between Israel and Jordan concerning international flights via the Aqaba airport, Dr. Mutawi said "we will not take any measures that might infringe on our sovereignty."

Last Wednesday Civil Aviation Authority Director General Jasser Zayyad was quoted as saying some international flights to the Israeli resort of Eilat will be diverted to Aqaba airport beginning next month, ahead of a joint airport agreement.

Mr. Zayyad told Agence France Presse that technical delegations from Jordan and Israel decided to "transfer some flights en route to Israel's Eilat airport to the Aqaba airport starting in September. But this

pilot project is a transitional phase until a final agreement on creating a joint airport at Aqaba is concluded."

In reply to a question regarding the stalled peace talks, Dr. Mutawi said "Jordan supports any efforts that lead to the resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in a comprehensive manner rather than to deal with particular issues alone."

According to Dr. Mutawi, the Cabinet approved the following during Saturday's regular session:

1- Permission for the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment to organise a specialised conference between Sept. 15 and 17 on safeguarding the national architectural heritage.

2- Creation of a Jordanian delegation, led by Director General of the Housing and

Urban Development Corporation Youssef Hyasat, to attend an Arab ministers housing and reconstruction council meeting in Cairo on Sept. 9 and 10.

3- Formation of a Jordanian delegation, led by Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Basam Saket, to attend an international telecommunications conference to be held in Geneva between Sept. 8 and 14.

4- Permission to attend the Jordanian-Yemeni and Jordanian-Sudanese higher joint committee meetings.

The delegation will be led by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and will include the ministers of Industry, Trade and Supply, Health, Education and Higher Education, Labour, Agriculture, Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs, and the Minister of State for Information Affairs.

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## AMPCO increases profits

AMMAN (Petra) — The government-owned Agricultural Marketing and Processing Company (AMPCO) last year exported \$56 million worth of tomatoes to European and Arab countries and expects to increase this year's exports to \$60 million, according to company General Director Khaloud Nasser.

AMPCO, established in 1983, is considered the foremost company in the Middle East in processing tomato paste, with a daily capacity of 2500 tonnes, Mr. Nasser stated.

Jordan has three tomato processing plants, of which two are state-owned, while

the third is privately-owned and managed, he noted.

He said the company encourages tomato growers, whose primary concern is the high cost of inputs, to increase output by paying well for their produce, adding that the three processing plants can absorb any amount of tomatoes sent by local producers.

Farmers are dissuaded from borrowing whenever possible in order to reduce their financial burdens, he commented.

AMPCO, which has a JD 15.9 million capital, turns a small profit which is used to cover preventable expenses, concluded Mr. Nasser.

## Engineers complete digging of Wadi Haddadeh-downtown tunnel

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amman Municipality Saturday completed digging of a 180-metre tunnel connecting the Wadi Haddadeh district with downtown Amman, marking the occasion with an event held at the site attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi, and other officials.

Dr. Abbadi spoke about the different construction phases of the tunnel, located within a hill, explaining that this eagerly anticipated improvement would ease traffic congestion in the downtown area.

"Today we have completed the digging of the first tunnel inside a mountain linking Wadi Haddadeh district with downtown Amman area and we hope that the tunnel and the roads extending outside it will be completed in two months time," he added.

The total cost of the project, which is being imple-



Mamdouh Abbadi

mented by an Italian firm, is expected to be between JD3 to JD4 million, and includes the excavation and the overhead bridge connecting the road near the courthouse with the tunnel, he remarked.

Last June Amman Municipality inaugurated two tunnels, constructed over a period of 135 days at a cost of JD 15 million, at the Third Circle in Jabal

Amman. The Wadi Haddadeh tunnel will play a major role in solving traffic problems within Amman, allowing vehicles heading from northern Amman toward Abdali district to bypass the downtown area, thereby reducing the present traffic congestion there. Dr. Abbadi's statement said.

The municipality has plans to construct other tunnels in the Amman area utilising the municipality staff of engineers and technicians, who have acquired a great deal of experience which will enable them to carry out future projects independently. Dr. Abbadi announced.

Among the audience attending the ceremony were the Ministers of Industry, Trade, and Supply, Interior, Tourism and Antiquities, Culture and Youth, as well as the general manager of the Italian company.

## Entrepreneurs, EU to discuss economic partnership impact

AMMAN (J.T.) — The European Union (EU) has agreed to provide a JD 40,000 grant to the Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA) to help finance a joint seminar in November concerning the impact of the EU-Jordanian partnership agreement on the Jordanian economy, a JBA statement announced Saturday.

The seminar is timely due to the expected profound changes in the Middle East, which is witnessing socio-economic developments affecting trade and investment. Saturday's announcement stated.

The European-Middle Eastern Free Trade Zone, a conglomeration of EU and

Middle Eastern nations, is expected to be in place by the year 2010, and by 2025 encompass 40 countries comprising nearly a billion inhabitants, the statement read.

"In view of these expectations and as Jordan and the EU have already initiated the partnership agreement, the JBA came to an agreement with the EU office in Amman on organising the seminar which will be attended by representatives of the private economic sector to discuss the impact of the EU-Jordanian partnership agreement on Jordan's economy, the challenges it entails and the opportunities it offers," the statement con-

tinued.

The three-day seminar, involving experts from the EU, countries such as Morocco and Tunisia which have already signed similar agreements, and Jordanian experts in various sectors, and JBA members, aims to orient Jordanian businesses on applying the partnership accord and how Jordan can benefit from the deal, it said.

The expected JD 60,000 overall cost of the seminar, including the accommodation of the invited experts, will be offset by the EU grant, with the JBA covering the balance, it concluded.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### University acceptances to be announced

AMMAN (Petra) — Head of the Committee for Admission at Jordanian Universities Walid Ma'ani Saturday said the final list of students admitted at public universities would be published Thursday. Dr. Ma'ani said the minimum average for acceptance is not fixed yet.

### Local products to be displayed in Damascus

AMMAN (Petra) — Thirty-four local companies will take part in the Damascus International Exhibition to be opened Aug. 28. Another products exhibit is planned in Italy.

## Weeklies use creative strategies to abide by law

By Amy Henderson  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The intended target of new amendments to the 1993 Press and Publications Law — the country's boisterous weekly press industry — still seems to be thriving one week after amendments came into force.

"To my knowledge, all papers have submitted their [financial] papers, and we haven't heard that any paper has failed to or been unable to correct its financial situation," said President of the Jordan Press Association Seif Sherif.

Amendments to the press law, introduced in mid-May, prescribe a series of financial and administrative requirements for newspapers, exact rigorous penalties on those in violation of the press law, and impose several strict restrictions on news reporting in the Kingdom.

While many believed that daily newspapers would have little problem accommodating new capital requirements prescribed by the law (JD600,000, up from JD50,000), most observers of the media industry expected the weeklies, with small capital and limited resources, to close their doors after being unable to produce the JD300,000 minimum capital required by the law.

However, weekly newspapers appear to have one-upped the government in the battle for the country's free press. Sources from the weekly industry have affirmed that legal manoeuvring has allowed the weeklies to stay afloat, for the time being, owing to what many call a "loophole" in the new amendments.

"When the government made the law, it wasn't very specific in some of their articles," says a source from Al Sabeel, the Islamist weekly paper. "As far as the capital requirement is concerned, they didn't specify that [the capital] had to be JD300,000 in cash, and that's how many papers got around it."

Al Sabeel itself, drawing on extensive financial resources from both the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamist party, the Islamic Action Front, had little trouble putting its house in order, he says.

"We already have JD200,000 paid up," he explains, "and according to the companies law, as a shareholder company, we have two more years to deposit the rest."

"It seems that the law was intended to force a

paid-up capital [from the weeklies]," says Musa Kilani, chief editor of Al Urdan weekly. "But the amendments did not specify whether this capital must be paid up or registered capital."

Mr. Kilani, the sole proprietor of Al Urdan, says that his paper, for example, had a paid-up capital of JD30,000 in 1995, which was later raised to JD90,000 and never registered because, according to the companies law under which the paper is registered, it was not required.

"So, [Al Urdan] has simply raised its registered capital, which requires us to pay a certain percentage for registration fees — which amounted to something like JD30 — and according to the companies law, this is legal," he says.

Other weekly papers with single owners have followed suit, such as Al Liwa' and the English-language Star, and several weeklies with more than one owner have sold their licences to individuals within the papers, re-registered these institutions with little or no paid-up capital, and reconciled differences with the press law in registered capital.

A source at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, working on the weekly papers' file, was unable to say how many papers have rectified their financial situation by boosting registered capital, but Mr. Kilani says he believes that as many as 17 of approximately 25 weekly papers have exploited the discrepancy in the press and companies law.

Still others have managed to raise their paid up capital by establishing partnerships with other weeklies or by attracting more investors. Al Bilad, for example, recently entered into partnership with Al Hayat after it closed, and absorbed Al Sayyad, another paper under the Al Bilad umbrella. Both will be published as a supplement to the paper. A source at Al Bilad has confirmed that the management of the paper has formed a new, limited liability company with a paid-up capital of JD550,000.

Last weekend, Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi said that a "committee of experts is currently examining [the papers'] relevant documents, and that papers would soon be informed as to whether or not they have acted within the parameters of the law."

"I am sure," says the source from Al Sabeel, "that the government is not satisfied by this, and I am sure they were taken a bit by surprise."

Mr. Sherif, however, asserts that regardless of whether or not the government is satisfied, the papers have acted legally and in compliance with the law.

"The applicable law is now the companies law," he says, "which does not require cash in the bank. So no one has the right to force the papers to pay this money."

Journalists are wary of the government's intentions, and say that should the papers overcome the challenge of the capital requirement, the government still has considerable leeway to crack down on the press.

"We expect the government to manipulate the situation through the clause that address the requirements for chief editors," he says. Amendments state that chief editors be "a Jordanian with actual and permanent residence in the Kingdom" and be a "totally dedicated journalist as his sole occupation or a fully committed job in journalism with ten years experience in both cases."

"Many papers, have experience abroad, or in the Gulf — maybe the government will not consider this experience as applicable," he says.

Congruent to the capital requirements, papers still confront the possibility of incurring substantial financial penalties for violations of the press law, any accumulation of which could be nearly as costly as the capital requirement.

The law now levies fines ranging from JD30,000-50,000 on those in violation of the loosely-worded law. Already, the prospect of sustaining such penalties has already forced at least one weekly out of business. The weekly political satirical paper Abed Rabbo stopped its press in mid-June, two months before the law became active on 15 August.

The owners of that paper, also owners of Jordan's first weekly, Shihani, reputed for its "bulldozing" reputation in exposing corruption and scandal, and the latest Arabic daily, Al Arab Al Yawm, asserted that finding the requisite capital was not an issue, but the fact that the new law did not provide any degree of latitude for satire and consequently exposed it to the possibility of incurring exorbitant penalties.

"So, I do consider this a victory, a good thing, for journalists," says one editor who requested anonymity. "But the government still has the upper hand. This is one battle, but they can still win [the war] through the fines."

## Ministry of information plans major restructuring projects — Mutawi

By Hind-Lara Mango  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — There are no plans to abolish the Ministry of Information, but major restructuring projects are under way, said Minister of State for Information Affairs, Dr. Samir Mutawi.

"I think the question of abolishing the ministry is fairly premature. But we are studying the ministry's requirements and expectations for the next few years," he told the Jordan Times.

Dr. Mutawi added that this department will determine the relevance of sustaining this ministry, and the feasibility of other departments, such as the Press and Publication Department, taking on some of the ministry's responsibilities.

However, the ministry essentially needs major restructuring, possibly including the latest technological advances in the field of communication and telecommunication, in order to face the twenty first century, Dr. Mutawi pointed out.

According to the minister, staff working in media departments, particularly in broadcasting and television, are presently being rehabilitated and trained to employ modern technology.

Restructuring has already commenced at the Ministry of Information with the creation of two new departments.

"One is the Internet and reports department. We are working on a web site in order to show Jordan to the world every morning," disclosed the minister.

He added that this department, including an international media relations section, would not only deal with news, but with reports, situation reports, and all related matter of interest to others who want to know more about Jordan.

Another division will be what Dr. Mutawi terms the Central Information of Ministries, which will function as a central bureau to handle media coverage on various ministries.

"This will include information about the policies, plans, and development programmes of each ministry," Dr. Mutawi elaborated.

The minister revealed that a fast service system, designed for journalists wishing to ask specific questions about the functions of ministries or some of the developments taking place, will be incorporated in this department.

"Some of the common complaints we receive at the ministry [pertain] to the difficulties faced by journalists in trying to find answers to their questions," Dr. Mutawi said.

"We want to provide a telephone and fax service so that anyone can query any government official through this office."

This department, similar to information bureaus in the U.S. and in England, would be limited to Jordanian ministries and departments.

The Jordanian Visitor's Information Bureau is the second major department in the making. It entails establishing an information office at every

cross point into the Kingdom "for example, the Queen Alia International Airport, [and] cross points between Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Israel, and Saudi Arabia," Dr. Mutawi noted.

He added "in our initial meetings at the Ministry of Information, we discussed cooperation with representatives from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Health, Culture, Royal Jordanian Airlines, the Civil Aviation Authority, and so on..."

The minister hoped that by the time the formation of this department was concluded, the ministry would be able to recruit people from these ministries, chiefly from radio and television.

Staff training would include computers in order to provide computer data for staff working at these points.

Initially, the Ministry of Information thought this project would be fairly easy to establish, but "when we hired 20 people for the first stage, we found them computer illiterate," Dr. Mutawi related.

"So, these people have to now be trained in handling information and data on a computer, and to [disseminate] information."

"We now know that new job specifications have to be put down for the employees working at this department."

These departments are essential to the field of information and therefore will be the raison d'être for the maintenance of the Ministry of Information, said Dr. Mutawi.



## Bosnian Serb Republic split in two after West backs president

BANJA LUKA (AFP) — Police loyal to Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic expelled political opponents from their own offices here Saturday, witnesses said, as a bitter power struggle threatened to split the Serb republic in two.

NATO and the West this week backed Ms. Plavsic in her political battle with rival hardliners loyal to former Serb strongman and indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic but it failed to ease tension.

The Bosnian Serbs now have two working administrations, two police forces controlled by two interior ministers, two armies, and, as of Friday, two state television stations. One set is grouped around Ms. Plavsic's western stronghold of Banja Luka, the other is in the east, controlled by Karadzic loyalists in the mountain village Serb capital, Pale.

Witnesses said police hit one town councillor, Radimir Savic, and harassed another, Momcil Buljic, in a raid on offices of their hardline Democratic Party, in the basement of the presidential building.

The councillors said they will lodge official complaints and in a statement accused Ms. Plavsic of "not obeying the rule of democracy." "We demand that she leaves Banja Luka," it said.

Twice this week British and Czech troops from the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) occupied the Banja Luka police headquarters and four other police bases in the town amid fears that pro-Karadzic police units would mount a coup against Ms. Plavsic.

By Saturday, the fears faded somewhat after the troops removed several truckloads of weapons, including machine guns and anti-tank rocket launchers, and remained posted at all five sites backed by armoured vehicles.

The U.N. International Police Task Force (IPTF) also continued screening all 560 police officers of the Banja Luka force, apparently to ensure their loyalty to Ms. Plavsic.

The West has been stepping up the pressure on Karadzic, identified as a major obstacle to the Bosnian peace process.

On Saturday, German Fo-

reign Minister Klaus Kinkel repeated that Karadzic will be arrested and face trial. "Karadzic and his supporters will answer for their attempts to torpedo the Dayton Peace Accords," he said in a communiqué, stating their "hour is inexorably coming."

The European Union said last month that development money for the Republika Srpska — the Bosnian Serb Republic — will be linked both to the return of refugees and the arrest of indicted war criminals, of which Karadzic is the most prominent.

On August 15, SFOR told Serb Special Police units that they could not guard war criminals, and media reports said that a multinational commando force from France, Britain and the United States was poised to swoop on Karadzic in his Pale headquarters.

But Western diplomats fear the pressure on the hardliners may cause a permanent split. "We may end up with parallel states and that's what worries us," one senior Western official told AFP.

The political divide cuts

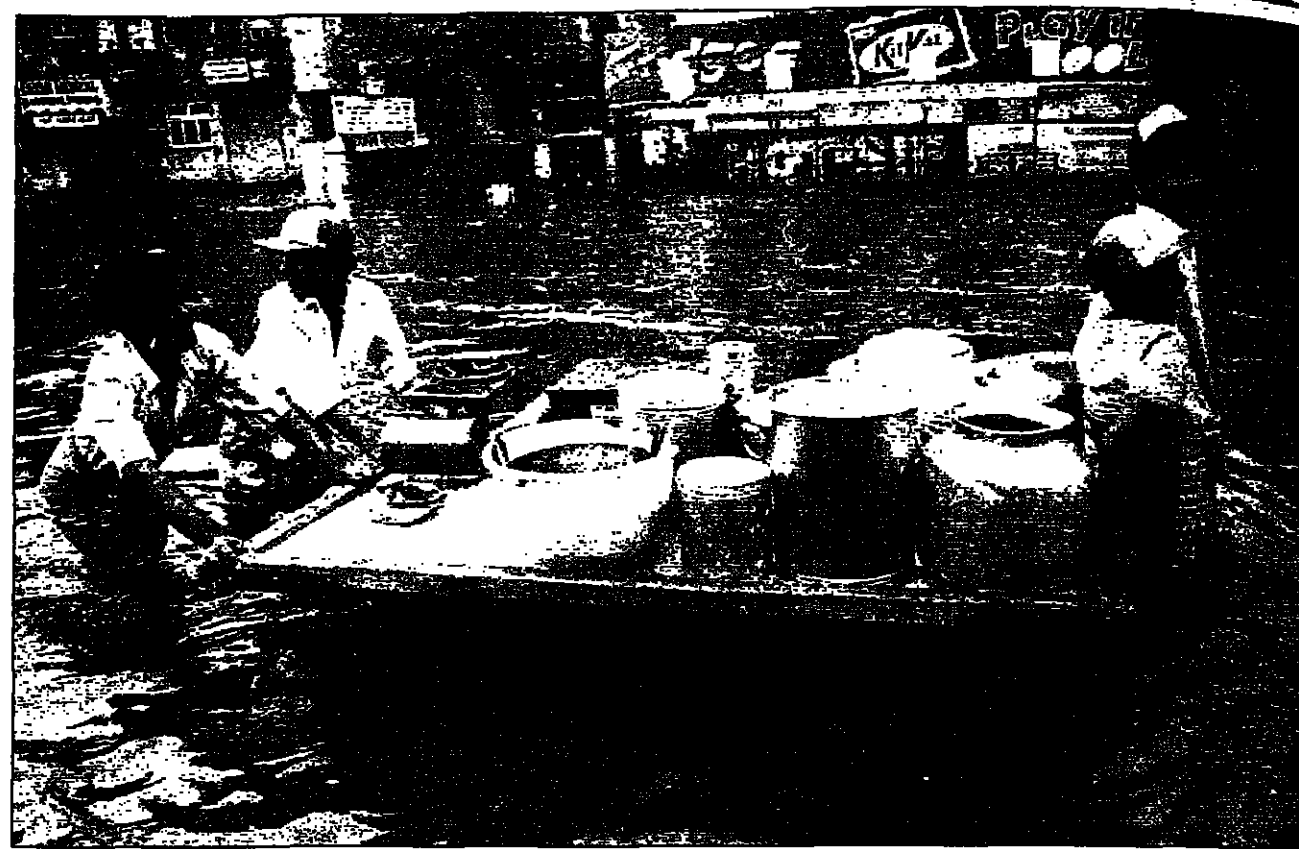
Srpska approximately into western and eastern territories, and diplomats say it is based on a "geographical reality."

If there is another war, the western part of Srpska is vulnerable, as it is linked to the rest of Serb territory only by a narrow corridor at the northern town of Brcko. The east, on the other hand, has a long common border with Serb-controlled Yugoslavia, seen by many as a big brother state and protector.

Diplomats say Serbs in the west feel more vulnerable than those in the east and are frightened by the no-compromise rhetoric of Karadzic supporters who reject links with their former Croat and Muslim enemies.

Division in the region is nothing new. In 1991 Yugoslavia divided into separate countries, and in 1992 and 1993 Bosnia divided into Croat, Serb and mostly-Muslim mini-states.

But Western diplomats say a fresh division in Bosnia is dangerous for the region, while Ms. Plavsic warned Friday that the situation "is deteriorating to the point where its (Srpska) existence is threatened."



Hawkers push a cart down a flooded street in Bombay after torrential rains drenched the city Saturday. Air, road and rail traffic were crippled and officegoers were still struggling to get home as the city recorded 346.2 millimetres of rainfall in 24 hours (Reuter photo)

## Torrential rains kill 15 in western India

BOMBAY (AFP) — Fifteen people have died in torrential rains in the western Indian state of Maharashtra, the Press Trust of India (PTI) and officials reported Saturday.

Eleven people were killed in the state capital Bombay, which experienced its worst rains in six years, while four others died in rain-related accidents elsewhere in Maharashtra.

Seven of the victims, including three children and two women, were washed away Saturday in an overflowing canal in Bombay, PTI said.

Two others were buried when their houses here collapsed, another was electrocuted and one more drowned in the city in the past 24 hours, officials added.

Four others have died in rain-related accidents across Maharashtra since the downpour hit the region Friday.

Officials said two dams in Maharashtra were flowing over a danger mark, adding that life in three other densely-populated districts was severely disrupted by the rains.

Transport services in Bombay were crippled as heavy rains continued to pound the city of 12 million people. The weather office said Bombay received about 250 millimetres (24 inches) of rain in just six hours Friday.

There were no signs that buses and the crippled local train service, which ferries six million people to work daily were about to resume.

Railway officials said many stations were waterlogged, with railway lines under two feet (60 centimetres) of water.

The heavy rains left several thousand home-bound commuters stranded at rail and bus stations. Commuters clung on to a few over-

crowded buses which moved through waist-high water.

Thousands walked long distances to reach home Friday despite appeals by the authorities for them to stay in their offices.

The city's domestic and international airports were closed for four hours overnight, an airport official said, adding that efforts

were underway to resume flights Saturday.

They said an Indian Airlines Airbus A-320, which was stranded on the main runway after its nose wheel detached upon landing was removed Saturday.

The downpour also disrupted telephone and electricity services. Several areas went without power.

Large parts of the metrop-

olis resembled a sea of muddy water with cars, roadside kiosks and garbage floating on it. Worst hit were the slum and pavement dwellers, who make up half the city's population.

Thousands of houses in slums were submerged in water, forcing families to take shelter on railway platforms and other safer areas.



Stranded commuters walk along railway tracks as torrential rains coinciding with high tides caused heavy floods damaging tracks and rendering roads undrivable in Bombay Saturday (Reuter photo)

## Pakistani lawyers observe partial strike to protest anti-terrorism law

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistani lawyers staged a partial strike Saturday to protest a tough law introduced by the government to curb sectarian bloodshed and terrorism, legal sources and witnesses said.

About 60 per cent of an estimated 6,000 lawyers in Punjab, the country's largest province, responded to the strike call by the Punjab Bar Council, sources said.

In southwestern Baluchistan, hundreds of advocates boycotted proceedings in courts, Ali Ahmad Kurd, president of the region's bar association, said in the provincial capital, Quetta.

The representative body of the lawyers community in Karachi, the country's largest city in southern Sindh, said its members went to work but would stage demonstrations against the "black law" next week.

The strike call went unheeded by lawyers in the country's fourth province, the North West Frontier Province, witnesses in the provincial capital, Peshawar, said.

Hafiz Abdur Rehman Ansari, vice-chairman of the Punjab Bar Council, said in Lahore the strike had been "successful" despite non-

cooperation by a group of pro-government members.

Mr. Ansari said his association will stage demonstrations throughout Sindh province beginning September.

Chaudhry Nazir, leader of pro-government group in the association, defended the stringent law as a necessary measure given the "extraordinary" law and order situation.

More than 150 people have been killed in Punjab in recent months in attacks and targeted shootings linked to tensions between militant groups from majority Sunni and minority Shiite Muslim groups.

Hundreds of others have died in Karachi this year in violence attributed to feuding between political factions and criminal mafias.

Meanwhile, about a dozen special courts started functioning in Punjab Friday under the anti-terrorism law voted by the federal parliament earlier this month.

One such court in Lahore began the trial of Mehran Ali, accused of involvement in a bomb blast that killed 26 people early this year.

A top leader of the Sunni extremist group Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, an organisation bitterly opposed to minority Shiite Muslims,

was killed in the bombing, which occurred outside a court in Lahore.

The much-criticised law imposes the death penalty in cases where an attack has killed one or more people and life imprisonment for other acts of violence or terrorism.

Special courts, which are tasked to decide cases in a week, have been set up to deal with offences related to terrorism, sectarian assassinations and other heinous crimes. Normal courts often take years to reach a decision.

The measure also allows the police to shoot a person engaged in any terrorist act after warning him as well as to search premises or arrest a suspect without warrant.

Human rights activists, lawyers, politicians and various groups have condemned the legislation and demanded its withdrawal, fearing abuse of sweeping powers by the police.

But the government, defending the law, has said extraordinary measures were needed to control sectarian killings and terrorism and promised the legislation would be phased out after restoring complete peace and order.

## Georgian group claims responsibility for abducting Russians

TBILISI (AP) — A Georgian guerrilla group active in separatist Abkhazia claimed responsibility Friday for the abduction of three Russian peacekeepers this week.

In a statement broadcast on Georgian television, the White Legion group said the soldiers will be kept hostage until Abkhazian separatists return the bodies of two murdered ethnic Georgians.

The three soldiers, two captains and a private, were seized early Monday. They were part of a contingent stationed in Georgia to separate Georgian and Abkhazian forces.

The White Legion said Abkhazian militants, allegedly assisted by Russian peacekeepers, killed two ethnic Georgian villagers in the border region of Gali last week while searching for Georgian guerrillas.

"Russian hostages would be freed on condition that the bodies of the slain Georgians are brought to Zugdidi" in western Georgia, it said.

The White Legion was formed about a year ago as a partisan movement to act in breakaway Abkhazia, a once-rich resort province along the Black Sea. The number of its fighters is unclear and is estimated at as few as 100 men or as many as 1,000.

Earlier this week, Georgian security officials said an agreement was reached with Abkhazia on the exchange of hostages and the bodies, but the White Legion's statement made no mention of it.

During heavy fighting in 1992-93 that left thousands dead, the rebels in Abkhazia managed to oust Georgian forces and ethnic Georgian civilians from the region. Since then, the two sides have been separated by a Russian peacekeeping contingent.

The leaders of Georgia and Abkhazia have been trying to resolve their conflict, and recently pledged an end to violence. Abkhazia considers itself an independent state, while Georgia views it as a Georgian province.

Moscow says it backs Georgia's territorial integrity and in recent years has helped enforce Tbilisi's economic blockade against Abkhazia.

## Landmine kills one Indian soldier, injures 7 in Kashmir

SRINAGAR (Agencies) — At least one Indian soldier was killed and seven others were injured by a land mine in the restive state of Jammu and Kashmir Saturday, an Indian Defence Ministry spokesman said.

"There was a mine blast at Badgam. So far one dead and seven are injured," spokesman, P. Purushottam told Reuters in Srinagar, the summer capital of the state.

But a guerrilla group Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen, claiming responsibility for the explosion, issued a statement to newspapers in Srinagar saying 16 soldiers were killed.

"Our mujahideen exploded a land mine in Budgam when an Indian army truck ran over it. The blast killed at least 16 soldiers including an officer," the statement said.

Later militants used a grenade to kill one person and injure 21 others near Handwara Hospital, officials said.

More than a dozen militant groups are fighting either for Kashmir's outright independence or merger with neighbouring Pakistan.

India, which controls two-thirds of Kashmir, accuses Pakistan of training Kashmiri militants. Pakistan, which rules the remaining one-third, denies the charge and says it only provides moral and diplomatic support to separatists.

Police and hospitals say more than 20,000 people have been killed since a separatist revolt in the Himalayan region broke out in 1990. Separatists and the state's chief minister, Farooq Abdullah, put the toll at about 50,000.

In a separate development, police here have arrested two Sikh separatists for allegedly planning to attack leaders of the Congress (I) party in the Indian capital, a spokesman said Saturday.

He said the police recovered one kilogram of highly-volatile RDX explosives from Kulwinder Singh Ragi and Sukhchain Singh of the Khalistan Zindabad Force Sikh separatist organisation from Punjab.

The two men were suspected of planning to disrupt celebrations marking India's 50th year of inde-

pendence on August 15 and kill Congress leaders allegedly involved in anti-Sikh riots which left 5,000 dead in Delhi in 1984, the spokesman said.

The spokesman said the two Sikhs were believed to be part of a suicide squad as capsules containing lethal cyanide were seized from them after their arrest on Friday night.

Sikh separatist violence, which has killed more than 25,000 people in the northern state of Punjab since 1983, ebbed in 1992 after the installation of an elected government in the frontier province.

The anti-Sikh riots erupted in India following the assassination of the former prime minister, Indira Gandhi by her two Sikh body guards in 1984. Several members of her Congress party have been accused of orchestrating the Hindu backlash.

## Young Catholics ring Paris in 'brotherhood chain'

PARIS (R) — Hundreds of thousands of young Roman Catholics held hands in a 36 kilometres "chain of brotherhood" encircling Paris Saturday as church bells pealed in tribute to visiting Pope John Paul.

Snaking along elegant boulevards and under grimy underpasses, the human chain was a highlight of the church's 12th World Youth Days during which the Pontiff is urging young pilgrims to revive commitment to religion.

Riot police kept away a group of about 200 protesters, who handed out condoms and denounced the pope's strict moral teachings in the biggest of several tiny demonstrations against the four-day papal visit.

Crowds of young people crammed underground trains to fan out on the "Field Marshalls" Boulevards, a ring of avenues named after the military commanders of French Emperor Napoleon until his defeat at Waterloo in 1815.

At 1050 a.m., on a signal given by the church's Notre Dame radio station, the pilgrims holding flags and banners stepped into the boulevards for a silent 90-second tribute.

They then broke into Beethoven's "Ode to joy" as church bells rang and motorists honked horns — some in support of the pilgrims, others angered by the jams.

Organisers estimated that 300,000 people took part at some points, the human chain was five deep.

Police kept some 200 demonstrators who had vowed to break the chain away from the pilgrims in northern Paris.

The protesters, including ecologists and anarchists, wore stickers emblazoned "neither god nor lord nor moral order."

There were some shouting matches but no scuffles as the protesters handed out condoms, bearing instructions for use, and chanted "Christians to Moscow," and "Christians to the lions."

One young Spanish pilgrim, given a condom in a packed metro train, threw it to the ground and snapped: "I don't want this."

The protesters said they saw the human chain as a symbol of what they called the stifling influence of religion. "Priest, rabbi, imam, your religion is oppressive," a poster said.

Church organisers said the young people held hands facing outwards from the capital, in a symbol of open-mindedness.

The pope meanwhile presided over a lively mass for 350 people from 135 countries, many of them in colourful national costumes, playing guitars, tambourines and African drums.

"My very dear young people, the church has need of you she needs your commitment at the service of the gospel, the pope counts on you too," he told the congregation in Paris' 13th century Romanesque Church of Saint-Etienne-Du-Mont.

He was due to hold a vigil with hundreds of thousands of young people at a Racecourse on the fringes of Paris in the evening.

He will say a mass at the Racecourse Sunday, at the end of his four-day visit, which is expected to draw an estimated 650,000 people.

The 77-year-old pope appeared to suffer from the stifling heat in the St-Etienne-Du-Mont Church, repeatedly wiping his forehead with a handkerchief and the sleeve of his gold and cream robe. "Yes, it's hot. I'm hot too," he told the faithful.

Prayers were said in five languages — Mongolian, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Lithuanian and Italian.

The Pope held two tiny babies in his arms and kissed them after their mothers dashed to his "Popemobile" Saturday and asked for his blessing during a visit to Paris.

The frail 77-year-old Pontiff, who was leaving the Church of Saint-Etienne-Du-Mont, stopped on the steps of the glass-sided vehicle when approached on the spur of the moment by the women.

After a few words with one of them, he clutched baby Maximilian, who was born on July 1, and kissed his head.

He then held and kissed three-week-old Louisa.

The Pontiff, who opposes artificial birth control and abortion, clashed with the Socialist Party of Prime Minister Lionel Jospin Friday by visiting the grave of a leading anti-abortionist.

The pope's spokesman, Joaquin Navarro Vals, said the Pontiff had simply intended to honour Jerome Lejeune, a personal friend and genetic scientist who died in 1994 aged 67.

The Socialist Party, adding its voice to some family groups and leftist associations, criticised the trip by saying it could incite militants challenging France's liberal abortion laws.





Cambodian government soldiers carry a wounded comrade injured during frontline fighting near O'Smach in northern Cambodia. Government troops under the command of powerful Second Prime Minister Hun Sen are fighting for full control over O'Smach, the last town held by retreating royalists of ousted First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who Mr. Hun Sen overthrew last month (Reuter photo)

## Long delayed repairs finally to get under way on Mir

MOSCOW (AP) — The crew of the battered Russian space station headed into the unknown Friday, attempting critical repair work in an airless, ruptured capsule that could determine how much longer Mir stays in orbit.

The station's two Russian cosmonauts were to open the hatch to the damaged Spektr module and try to restore the station's depleted power supply. Such difficult and potentially dangerous repair work has never been done before.

President Boris Yeltsin urged Russians Friday to honour the Mir crew and appreciate the huge challenges cosmonauts face. Many Russians, weary from the country's seemingly unending political and economic crisis, have shown little interest in Mir as its crew has battled a chain of accidents and mishaps in recent months.

"Perhaps we have forgotten that space is not a propaganda show. Space is first of all a hard and dangerous job with the greatest responsibilities," he said in his weekly radio address.

Spektr was rammed and punctured during a June 25 collision with a cargo ship, forcing the crew to seal it off, disconnecting cables that attached its solar panels to the rest of the station. Since then, Mir has only had about half of its normal power.

If the repair is successful, three of Spektr's four panels will come back on line. Russians say the Mir will be back at 90 per cent of its power but NASA estimates it at about 60 per cent.

The repairs are expected to last a little over four hours, but the crew will

need 11 hours getting ready: eating breakfast, taking medical tests, and finally suiting up in the bulky, pressurised space suits that will protect them from the vacuum inside the Spektr module.

Once in their suits, the cosmonauts will seal off the passageway leading to the depressurised Spektr, open the hatch and take their first look inside.

They are not certain what they may find, but the interior is likely to pose hazards. Broken equipment or shards of glass from ruptured containers could tear a spacesuit. A cosmonaut could become entangled in loose cables or even his own lifeline.

Russian space officials said Thursday that Pavel Vinogradov, a rookie cosmonaut and the mission's flight engineer, will be the one to enter the Spektr. He will work to reconnect 11 cables to the Spektr side of the hatch, while Mission Commander Anatoly Solovoy assists from the hatchway and reattaches power lines on the other side, perhaps an even more difficult task.

"They are going to make the connections with gloves," Igor Goncharov, a deputy mission control chief, said Thursday. "If they find it tricky to do it with bulky gloves, they have special tools to help. The crew trained to do it both ways on the ground."

The third member of the Mir crew, American Astronaut Michael Foale, will be stationed in the Soyuz escape capsule to assist in case of trouble.

If they have time, the cosmonauts will also film the interior of Spektr and col-

lect logbooks, computer disks and personal items belonging to Mr. Foale, who had worked in the module before the June collision.

Altogether, space officials expect the repair mission to last a little over four hours, ending shortly after 1300 GMT. But the team can stay longer if they like. However they will have about seven hours' supply of oxygen.

Mr. Yeltsin again blamed the last crew of Mir for the June collision when a supply ship rammed the Spektr module during a docking exercise, saying it could jeopardise the space programme.

"Because of the result of a minor mistake made by cosmonauts, the work of many years of thousands of scientists, technicians and workers may vanish."

But he played down the incident, citing the extreme conditions in space. "If they sometimes make mistakes, it's understandable. Work in extreme situations and the constant stresses tells on them," he said.

The crew spent Thursday rereading instruction manuals and clearing away equipment blocking doors to other modules. Those doors, which open onto the same docking port as the Spektr, will have to be sealed during the repair to keep other parts of the station from losing air pressure.

Russian officials expressed confidence that the team was more than prepared for anything they might encounter.

"We have tried to simulate all possible difficulties during training on the ground," Mr. Goncharov said. "The crew is ready."

## Italian government draws fire over reprieve for Albanians

ROME (AP) — A government decision to put off the repatriation of Albanian migrants has drawn opposition fire at a time when several crimes by foreigners have provoked headlines.

Interior Minister Giorgio Napolitano repeated on Rai state radio Saturday that the 10,000 Albanians would probably have another two months to stay in Italy. The cabinet would meet in the coming weeks to decide, he said.

Aug. 31 was the deadline for them to leave. Some 17,000 Albanians have crossed the Adriatic Sea this year to Italy, mostly in February and March during a wave of unrest in their homeland. Most were granted temporary stays.

The Italian and Albanian governments have said they want to cooperate in the repatriation. But Albanian officials said Friday that it was unlikely the country would be stable enough to accept the 10,000 migrants by Oct. 31.

Members of the centre-right opposition to Premier Romano Prodi's government, the Liberty Alliance, called for a parliamentary debate on the issue. A party statement said the government had "surrendered" on the repatriation.

At the same time, some commentators and politicians have warned against a backlash against immigrants after several recent crimes, including a sexual assault on an Italian girl by a Moroccan immigrant.

In the latest case, a Macedonian shepherd has confessed to raping and killing an Italian woman and fatally shooting her friend Wednesday while the two were hiking in the mountains east of Rome, police say.

Reports said the suspect, Alyebi Hasani, had been in Italy for five years and had a previous conviction for theft. It was unclear whether he had legal status or not.

Gian Enrico Rusconi, a commentator in the Turin daily La Stampa, wrote Saturday that the double murder case, the Albanians and the overall immigrant situation in Italy had to be considered separately.

"But beyond the necessity of making these distinctions and repeating sacrosanct, and equally vain, general principles about the rights and duties of immigrants, discomfort among the citizens is growing and the government is losing credibility," he said.

## Cambodian royalists push rivals back from last bastion

CHONG CHOM (AFP) — Troops loyal to Cambodia's exiled first premier Saturday followed up territorial gains with an artillery barrage aimed at forces of strongman Co-Prime Minister Hun Sen, witnesses said.

Mr. Hun Sen's troops moved artillery pieces back around five kilometres from where they had pounded ridges on the outskirts of the royalists' last bastion of Cambodian territory, opposite here in O Smach.

"There was heavy shelling last night, but small arms fire has given way to outgoing artillery rounds as royalists pressed on yesterday's gains," a witness told AFP Saturday.

Artillery lines of royalist FUNCINPEC Party forces loyal to exiled First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh were moved a kilometre or two into Cambodia from positions that had nearly backed up on the Thai border.

However, a number of incoming shells landed some 300 metres from the border, and a member of royalist commander, General Nheik Bun Chhay's entourage was severely injured in an explosion about two kilometres away.

He was rushed to Thailand for treatment after a shell appeared to have blown away part of his face, reporters at the border crossing said. There was no immediate report on the injured man's condition.

Meanwhile, Khmer Rouge fighters joined royalist soldiers in O Smach in apparently combined platoons rotating forward to the frontlines in what was otherwise a quiet day, AFP witnesses said.

Thai military sources have said some 2,000 royalist soldiers in O Smach facing Mr. Hun Sen's troops were being supported by 600-700 Khmer Rouge fighters.

Nheik Bun Chhay denied in an interview with French radio late Friday that royalist and rebel troops had combined forces, saying Khmer Rouge guerrillas had attacked Mr. Hun Sen's troops east of O Smach. The rival Cambodian factions have been battling for O Smach — an unlikely strategic target set in a remote and malarial corner of northwest Cambodia's jungle region — for the past 10 days.

The battle for the agricultural and trading town broke out after forces loyal to Mr. Hun Sen routed the prince's outgunned men from their other northern strongholds. Thai army regional commander, Major General Chirasak Pommprakhom said Saturday that although it was not safe for the some 21,000 "displaced persons" to return to O Smach, arrangements could be made if they wanted to return to Poipet, another border town.

"If someone wants to stay here temporarily — if they are waiting for some family member fighting in O Smach — that is Okay," Gen. Chirasak told reporters at a temporary refugee site some five kilometres from Chong Chom.

Otherwise, they could be transported to Poipet, some 125 kilometres southwest of here, opposite the Aranya-prathet district of Thailand's eastern Sa Kaew province, he said.

Mr. Hun Sen seized sole control of Phnom Penh and the coalition government in early July after toppling Prince Ranariddh in a weekend of bloody street fighting in the capital.

Prince Ranariddh Saturday denied accusations from Phnom Penh that he had instigated the takeover by plotting with the Khmer Rouge to overthrow the government.

The prince said that in his capacity as First Prime Minister he had signed a joint statement with nominal Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan announcing the rebel movement's recognition of the constitution and king and the severing of all links with Pol Pot.

"The aim of the joint statement was to put an end to the Khmer Rouge both as a political and military movement through peaceful means and therefore achieve real and lasting peace for Cambodia," he said Saturday in a statement received here.

There had also been a chance that Pol Pot — held responsible for the deaths of some two million Cambodians during the 1975-79 reign of the Khmer Rouge and deposed by the rebels in a show trial last month — could be tried by an international tribunal, he said.

"Hun Sen's coup of July 5-6, 1997 put an end to all these positive moves," Prince Ranariddh said.

Meanwhile a former Cambodian strongman feared to have been killed during a coup last month fled the country Friday after seven weeks in hiding.

Pen Sovann, who re-entered the political scene just a few months before the coup, looked tired and drawn as he departed from Phnom Penh International Airport Friday morning for Malaysia en route to a third country.

In a show of concern for his safety, U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Quinn escorted him from the tarmac onto the plane.

Mr. Pen Sovann said he had been kept in "many, many" different locations since the July 5-6 coup in which Second Prime Minister Hun Sen ousted First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

A month before the coup, Mr. Pen Sovann announced he was establishing a new political party to contest the May 1998 general election. He harshly denounced Mr. Hun Sen, and was widely regarded as a Prince Ranariddh ally.

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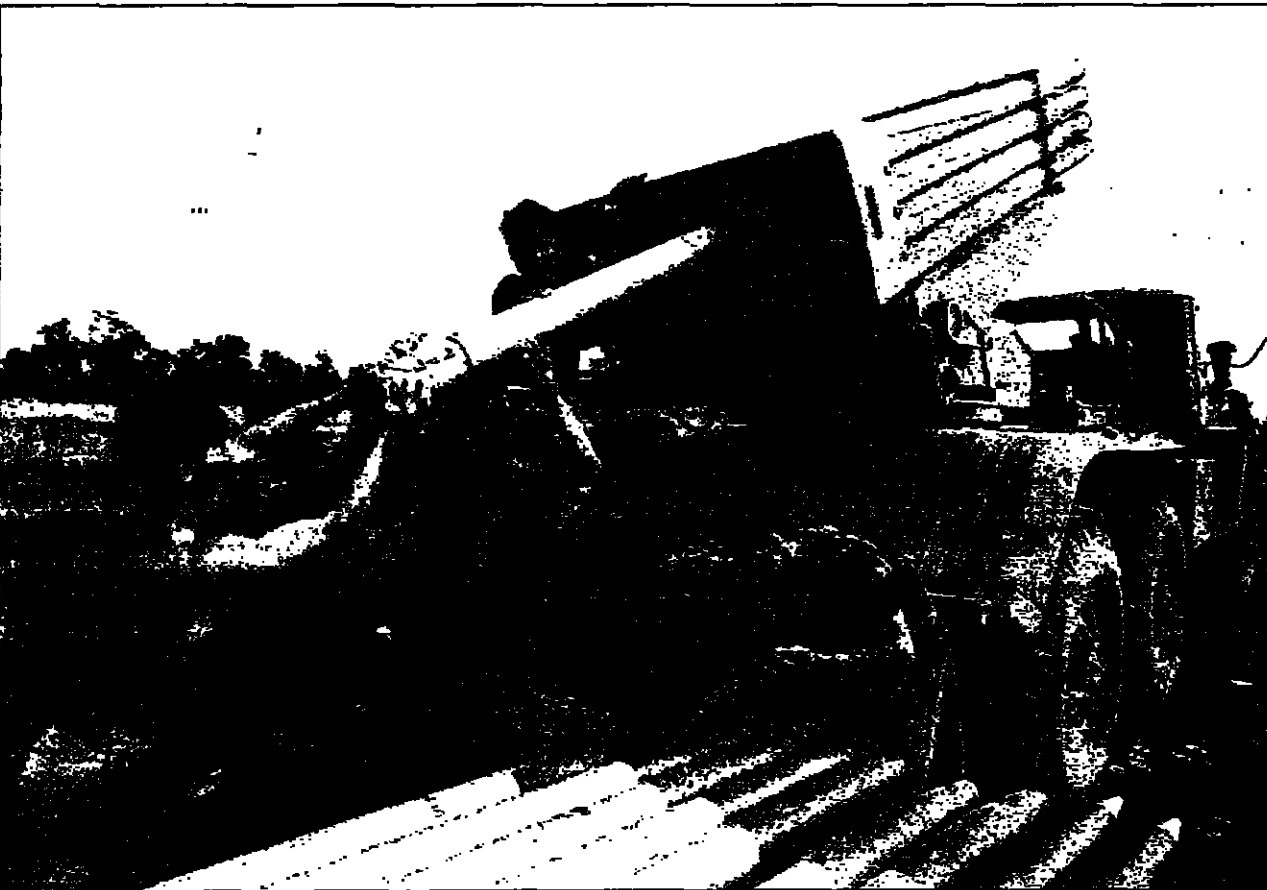
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A month before the coup, Mr. Pen Sovann announced he was establishing a new political party to contest the May 1998 general election. He harshly denounced Mr. Hun Sen, and was widely regarded as a Prince Ranariddh ally.

He said the UNHCR team, led by top officials from the agency's offices in Kigali and the Congolese capital Kinshasa, would be discussing with local officials whether the camp could be moved further away from Hutu areas.

Ms. O'Toole said the UNHCR was concerned by reports that local Hutu villagers, many of whom are believed to have returned to Rwanda from refugee camps in Zaire after the anti-Mobutu revolt started, were involved in Thursday's assault on the Tutsis.



Cambodian government soldiers load a BM-21 Soviet-made multiple rocket launcher on Route 68, 20 kilometres south of the frontlines of O'Smach in northern Cambodia (Reuter photo)

## 5 more bodies recovered after Nigeria clashes

LAGOS (AFP) — Five more corpses were recovered in a stream in the Nigerian town of Modakeke, bringing the death toll in communal clashes to 70 within the past week, newspapers said Saturday.

Newspapers said the bodies were discovered Friday following clashes between Modakeke and life residents over the relocation of a regional government headquarters common to the two communities.

The Osun state govern-

ment, which relocated the headquarters from Enuwa to Oke Ogbu, a community controlled by the life, imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew on the two feuding communities as well as deployed riot policemen to these towns and nearby villages.

Twelve residents of the two communities were last Thursday before an life court formally charged with felony, arson, rioting and causing a breach of the peace.

The life people confronted them and a bloody confron-

ten other suspects still in police detention over the disturbances would soon be charged as soon as the investigation into their cases was completed, the police stated.

The clashes, triggered a week ago when about 5,000 Modakeke youths took to the streets and chanted slogans which the life community said insulted their traditional king, Oba Okunade Sijuwade.

The life people confronted them and a bloody confron-

tation followed, in which scores of people were also injured and houses and vehicles were vandalised.

Peace is gradually returning Saturday to the two towns, according to residents and local press reports. Commercial vehicles which disappeared from the streets in the two towns are gradually returning while shops and offices have also started to reopen.

But police are still mounting surveillance on the two towns and their villages.

## U.N.: 124 dead in Rwanda massacre of Tutsis

GENEVA (R) — A total of 124 people died in an attack by suspected Hutu gangs on a camp in Rwanda for ethnic Tutsis from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the former Zaire, the United Nations refugee agency UNHCR said Saturday.

Spokeswoman Pam O'Toole said a UNHCR team was going to the area in northwestern Rwanda over the weekend to investigate and would meet Congo's minister for national reconstruction, Etienne Mbaya, across the border.

The latest death figures in the incident Thursday night comprised 107 refugees and some 17 others, many of whom appeared to be members of the group that attacked the camp. "It would seem the refugees fought back," Ms. O'Toole told Reuters.

Reporting the massacre Friday, the UNHCR said first reports indicated that the ethnic Tutsis, who had fled fighting in the Masisi region of Congo, were backed to death with machetes, although some firearms were used.

Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated government, installed in 1994 after the former Hutu regime launched attacks on Tutsis which left over half a million dead, blames Hutu rebels for the latest attack, at Mudende camp near the border town of Gisenyi.

The rebels are fighting the new Rwandan army that backed a revolt started by Tutsis in Zaire late last year. That revolt led to the overthrow of long-time ruler President Mobutu Sese Seko, who fled into exile.

Ms. O'Toole said the UNHCR was concerned by reports that local Hutu villagers, many of whom are believed to have returned to Rwanda from refugee camps in Zaire after the anti-Mobutu revolt started, were involved in Thursday's assault on the Tutsis.

She said the UNHCR team, led by top officials from the agency's offices in Kigali and the Congolese capital Kinshasa, would be discussing with local officials whether the camp could be moved further away from Hutu areas.

## Puerto Rico could be model for East Timor peace — rebel leader

LISBON (AFP) — East Timor rebels could accept the sort of relationship Puerto Rico has with the United States as a model for future ties between East Timor and Indonesia, a rebel leader said on Portuguese television.

It was one of the solutions put forward in U.N. sponsored negotiations to try to break the deadlock over the former Portuguese colony that Indonesia invaded in 1975, sparking an armed opposition by separatists.

"It has not been rejected by the resistance," said East Timor guerrilla leader, Kozis Santana. "We work on the principle that any solu-

tion aimed at allowing the people of East Timor the right to self-determination is acceptable," he said.

Puerto Rico has commonwealth status with the United States which allows the Caribbean island to have almost complete self-government. Only foreign relations and defence remain the domain of the U.S. federal government.

Under the proposal for East Timor, the territory would become a state with formal links with Indonesia, which would take over defence and foreign affairs while allowing local self-government in other areas.

During the interview, Mr. Santana urged Lisbon to state its position on what he called the Puerto Rican solution.

He also called on Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Guterres to consider rebels as an integral part of the Portuguese army, since "we operate in the mountains of East Timor defending a country which is still internationally recognised as a part of Portugal."

The United Nations has never recognised Indonesian rule over East Timor. Indonesia invaded in 1975 at the time when Portugal was overthrowing dictatorial rule and withdrawing from most of its colonies.

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## 'Britain's queen free to travel in India'

NEW DELHI (AP) — Backtracking from an earlier statement asking Britain's Queen Elizabeth II not to visit the northern state of Punjab, India's prime minister has said she can travel freely in his country, newspapers reported Friday.

"She is welcome to visit any part of the country," Inder Kumar Gujral was quoted as saying in the Times of India and The Asian Age.

Britain's Observer newspaper earlier this

week quoted Mr. Gujral as saying the government had asked the queen to skip the Sikh holy city of Amritsar because of a massacre by British forces in 1919.

Relatives of massacre victims had demanded that the Queen apologise for the killing of 379 civilians and wounding of 1,200 others. Britain ruled India for some 200 years until 1947 and the queen's visit was to commemorate 50 years of Indian independence.







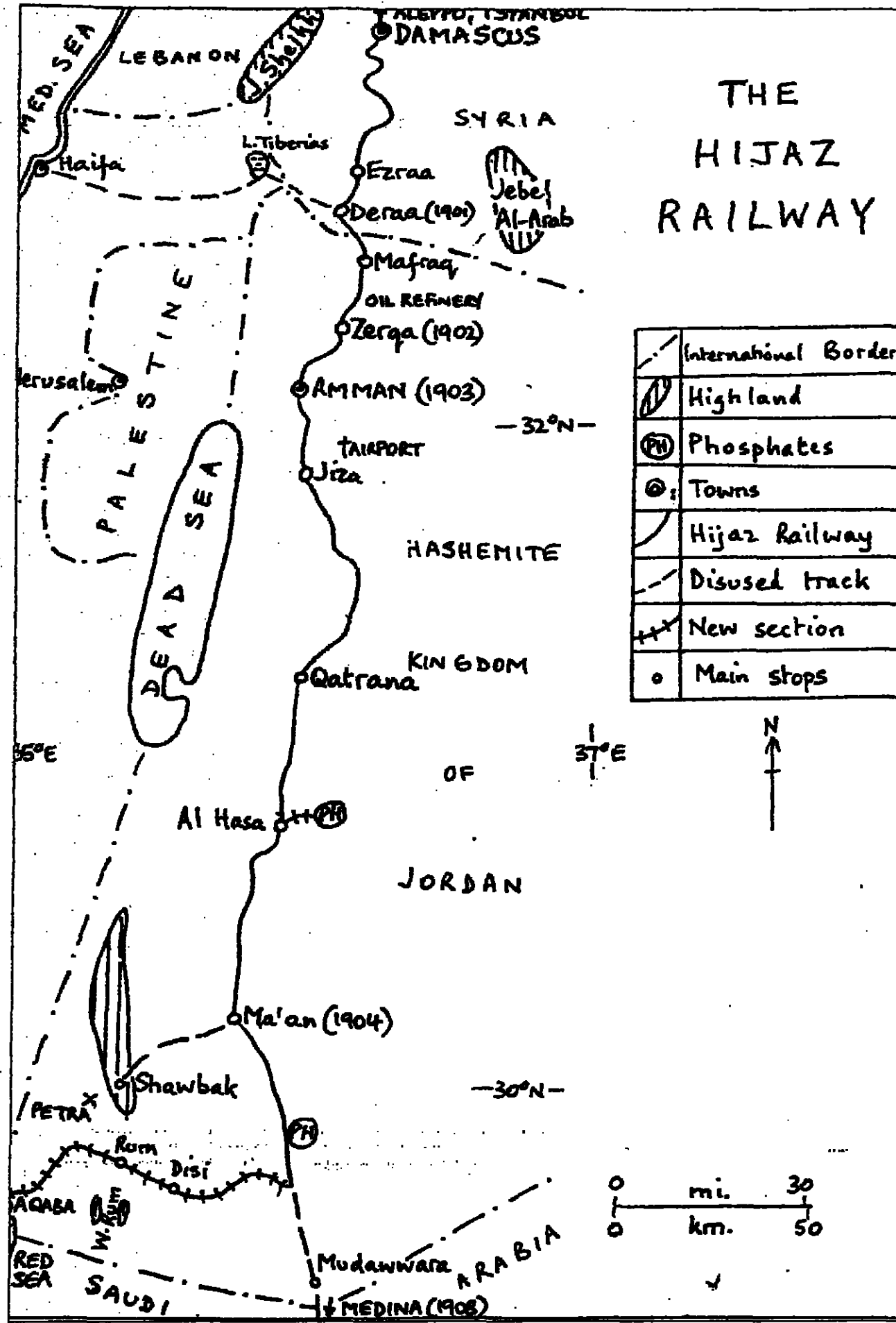
# Hijaz railway — big potential, no near-future plans

By Richard Tanner

NINE HOURS after leaving Damascus, the jogging on hard wooden seats broken by long waits at dusty deserted stations, our train stopped. The guard got down, opened the gates and we had arrived in Amman. The "mahatta" had its Arabic signs paralleled in English: Station Master, Waiting Room, Platform. As the small crowd of passengers made for the Way Out, we stayed to admire the relics from an earlier era: old wagons, a wooden turntable, water pumps and half-a-dozen locomotives, one in steam. Though worried by our interest, station officials eventually allowed us to inspect these reminders of the last days of the Ottoman Empire, of the Great Arab Revolt and of T. E. Lawrence.

Whilst it may have been planned to ease the pilgrims' hardship on the annual Haj, the concept of a Hijaz railway was seized upon both by the Ottomans, who saw it as an opportunity to reestablish their rule over bedouin lands, and by their German allies, needing a counter to the British control of the Suez Canal-Red Sea route. His appeals to the Muslim World having raised the money, Sultan Abdul Hamid engaged a German engineer, Heinrich Meissner, who used Turkish army labour to construct the "Pilgrims' railway" from Damascus to Medina between 1901 and 1908. Eight hundred and twenty miles long, it followed the old caravan route marked by wells, reservoirs and ruins, first to Deraa, with its 100 mile-long branch line to Haifa and the Mediterranean, then on through Ma'raq, Zarqa, Amman, Qatranah and Ma'an, before heading south-east into Arabia Desserta and Medina.

From the start, the builders were hampered by local bedouins anxious to retain their lucrative spice and pilgrim route. Blockhouses had to be built at 10 mile intervals to protect the track and iron sleepers used to prevent easy removal. During 1916-18, Lawrence continued the tradition of attacking the railway, tying up enough of the Turkish army for Allenby to push north through Palestine to ensure the Ottoman collapse. While the southern section beyond Ma'an was



abandoned after only 10 years' use, the allies repaired the track to Damascus on which we had been travelling. Our journey from Damas-

cus had not been without incident. Officials at that splendid late Ottoman edifice, the Hijaz Railway Station, had directed us to a suburban station; the weekly

"express" was unable to negotiate the open crossings and snarled traffic to reach the centre of this bustling metropolis. Arriving to ensure our seats, we found

Gadam Station deserted, waited half an hour for the first rolling stock to arrive and still longer for the booking office to open. We paid 160 Syrian pounds, around

\$2 or \$3, were issued with cardboard tickets, dully printed and punched, then found that the comfortable 1960s carriages drawn up at the platform were for local service. They were standard gauge; the narrow gauge "international express" was just backing in: three ancient open carriages and so few passengers we had half a carriage to ourselves. We needn't have risen before dawn.

Passing through the crowded housing, factories and rubbish dumps of southern Damascus, whistling and creeping across every road, we emerged into the country. Children, excited by this weekly event, ran alongside the train as it crushed the flowering pasture across the tracks; we waved to workers looking up from their manual toil in nearby fields. Winding round green hills and stopping at small stations, the train bucked and heaved its way across the Hauran, fertile in the spring, with the snowy peaks of Jabal Sheikh (Mt. Hermon) framing the western skyline. As the sun rose higher, we appreciated the natural air-conditioning of the windowless carriages but wondered what a winter journey would be like.

At Deraa junction, the Syrian diesel engine was replaced, after an hour, by an equally rusty one sporting Jordanian livery. Crossing the border was effortless as agents from Syria, Jordan and the railway company itself checked and rechecked our passports which were eventually returned after another long hot wait at Ma'raq Station. By now we wished we had brought more food and drink as none was available either on the train or at the stops.

The route became more rugged and the need for the narrow-gauge track more obvious as we twisted through deeply incised limestone hills to reach Zarqa. Here progress slowed to half-crawl as we squeezed past busy market stalls and refugee housing built right against the track. After stopping at another level crossing, this time to set down a family living up the road, our route followed the attractive Zarqa valley, winding through irrigated fields before making the final ascent into Amman to complete the 150-mile journey.

Once merely a stop on the three-day journey to Medina, Amman is now the terminus. Though the track south was a lifeline to central Jordan until its transfer to the phosphate companies twenty years ago, now it is used only by occasional "specials." These charter trains, sometimes headed by a steamer, climb the hairpins onto the plateau, carrying up to 250 passengers in the five surviving carriages south into the desert to Jiza or Qatranah. Even the locals have given up digging holes by the track to find the last payroll of the Turkish army delivered but not paid in 1917. South of Ma'an, the rails have been lifted, the stations left to crumble, though an original engine was still stranded in its shed at Madain Saleh in the 1960s.

At that time, talks between Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia suggested each would pay one-third of the cost of reopening the line, but nothing was done. The Saudis already had a good road from Jeddah through Medina to Mudawwara and may have felt one month's Haj trade would not support the railway through eleven lean months. After 1967, Jordan and Syria had other thoughts on their minds — healing the wounds of war and housing Palestinian refugees. More recent ideas to import oil through Aqaba for Zarqa refinery or to exchange Amman's cement for Hauran barley have come to nothing, for the run-down narrow-gauge railway cannot carry such bulky goods. However, the development of phosphate mining in central Jordan has revived a second section of the railway. Thirty miles of track south of Ma'an has been relied and a new line built past Wadi Rum and down the gorge to the port of Aqaba, carrying a million tonnes a month of phosphates for exports. There is a certain irony in being able to ride past the head of Wadi Rum where David Lean set up tracks for his film "Lawrence of Arabia."

Clearly the tourist possibilities are not lost on Borhan Shreydeh, until recently director general of Hijazi Railway. The charter trains from Amman could complete the run to Aqaba, but their braking system was never designed for the steep gradients down to the sea. Without new stock, a branch line

into Wadi Rum must remain a dream; so too any plans to reopen the old timber fuel branch line up to Shobak for tourists en route to Petra. More realistic are Borhan's ideas for a working museum at Amman's mahatta, not just for tourists, but for Jordanian students as well, to see how their country was opened up by the Pilgrim Railway.

This old railway did indeed bring the desert margins back to life ninety years ago. Jordan's centre of gravity moved eastwards, down from the highlands around Irbid, Ajlun, Salt and Karak, and onto the plains where new towns grew around the stations: Ma'raq, Zarqa, Amman, Jiza, Qatranah, Ma'an. Some of these places were not new at all, but ancient sites neglected since Roman-Byzantine-Umayyad times and now reestablished along this modern Via Trajana.

Borhan proposes a new north-south railway line, 20 kilometres east of the old, encouraging further reclamation of the desert margins. It would provide work, disperse Jordan's rapidly growing population and preserve the old line. The new line would have to be standard gauge, not only to carry the phosphate exports, the oil imports, the passing trade in sheep and the cement-for-grain trade but also to reach Europe over Syrian and Turkish tracks, and maybe through Saudi Arabia to the Gulf. Adding an east-west route from Haifa to Baghdad would put Jordan really at the hub of things.

As the giant trucks rumble down the Desert Highway from Europe and Turkey to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, there seems little chance of the Hijaz Railway taking the strain.

This old, single-track, narrow-gauge railway minimally maintained for 90 years needs major investment or replacement. Until that happens, Borhan and the charitable institution that runs the railway will have to be content with improvements to the Damascus-Amman run, a railway museum at Amman Mahatta and a few more steam trips into the desert.

The writer is teacher of geography at the Baccalaureate School, Amman. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

## Brain vs. brawn in first mind Olympics

By Scott McCormack  
Reuter

LONDON — The world of competitive sport faces a new breed of athlete, the mental gymnast, vying for gold at the first mind sports olympiad, a week of brain games has opened in London on Monday.

Instead of slugging it out in the boxing ring or tumbling across padded floormats, competitors perform intellectual acrobatics in events ranging from speed reading to computer programming and crossword puzzles to the more traditional chess and draughts (checkers). More than 1,500 people have signed up to take part in the olympiad, which is open to anyone wanting to test his or her cranial capacity — and spend a week playing games.

"All these people are suddenly coming out and saying 'yes, we love scrabble, we think it helps the mind'," said organiser Tony Buzan without a hint of irony. "People who do crosswords or jigsaws have somehow been made to think they were wasting their time. But this is really important stuff."

crosswords and watching television quiz shows will be unlikely to earn any olympic laurels.

"The top mental athletes are also extremely physically fit," Mr. Buzan said. "There is a strong connection between the two."

The event was the brainchild of two chess grandmasters and Mr. Buzan, a British memory-guru and motivational speaker who has published 19 books on the power of the mind.

"For thousands of years there have been physical championships. It seemed odd that the world had focused for so long on the body and not on the brain," said Mr. Buzan.

The olympiad also pits men against women, billing itself as "the first global intellectual battlefield".

From phone books to football cards

Competitors in the events at London's Royal Festival Hall include the likes of Creighton Carvallo, a man who once memorised the infinite mathematical number Pi — the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter — to 20,013 decimal places.

Just getting that many digits out of his mouth in 1980 took the former psychiatric nurse nine hours and 10 minutes.

The 52-year-old retired recently and now travels around the world practising his skills and showing off his cerebral prowess on television programmes.

Asked why he devoted so much time to committing digits to memory, Mr. Carvallo explained that he simply liked figures. "I started memorising things when I was seven, at first football cards from bubble gum packets, and just keep getting better and better at it."

**"With hard mental training we can actually rewire our brains. It gets more sophisticated and the cells become more complex. It's pretty revolutionary."**

Aside from cramming his head full of sporting statistics and endless streams of decimals, Mr. Carvallo can recite by heart 5,000 telephone numbers from his home town Middlesbrough in northeast England, including all those beginning with the letter A and all the Smiths, perhaps the most common surname in Britain.

He is competing in the memory category, a two-day event that includes memorising 2,000 random digits in one hour, reciting poetry, matching names with faces, and

learning binary computer code, a string of 1s and 0s.

But Mr. Carvallo remains undeterred by the prospect of stiff competition. "I'm not nervous. I just love it," he said, adding that he won a world record last week when he memorised 12 random digits in 2 seconds.

But where's my car parked?

Aside from the memory event, other categories include competitions for mental calculation, cre-

ative thinking, and IQ tests. There are also things for dihard gamers, such as jigsaw puzzles, rummikub, mastermind, and stratego plus gin rummy, Chinese chess and more exotic, lesser-known games like zatre and dama.

Glory for the victors will not just be wearing a gold medal, but actually growing smarter while they probe the powers of the human mind. "The brain works as a muscle — the harder you use it, the more it grows," proclaims a

brochure for the competition, predicting that brain games would be the great growth area of the next millennium.

Mr. Buzan, a trained psychologist who advises the British Olympic rowing team, explained that taking part in thought-provoking pursuits actually increases brain capacity. "With hard mental training we can actually rewire our brains. It gets more sophisticated and the cells become more complex. It's pretty revolutionary," he said.

For the average person who occasionally forgets where he or she parked the car or put the keys, Mr. Buzan — who says his IQ ranges from 150 to 200 depending on the day — offered hope.

He said the first step to intellectual improvement was to turn the brain into a hobby. Asked what that meant, he replied: "Anyone who doesn't understand the brain asks that question. It means opening your mind like a child or an artist, improving your ability to imagine and sense things."

Referring to the car dilemma, Mr. Buzan asked: "How could you possibly lose a three tonne object? Because you didn't imagine it, associate it with the environment. You have to find connections, learn to link things together."

## UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN

### ANNOUNCEMENT

The University of Jordan shall introduce a new International Programme which leads to the award of the B.Sc. Degree in Medicine and Surgery, effective the fall semester of the upcoming academic year 1997/98. The programme is intended to attract international students with high grade point averages in the High School (Tawjihi) Certificate, or its equivalence, on competitive basis. Registration for the programme, which started on August 18, 1997, shall remain open for a further period of three weeks.

Application forms may be obtained from one of the following locations:

- I. Inside Jordan:  
Department of Registration and Admission  
University of Jordan  
Amman-Jordan  
Tel. No.: 962 6 843555 (Extension: 2167/2197)  
Fax: 962 6 832318  
E-Mail: postmaster@ujced.edu
- The University of Jordan Hospital  
University of Jordan  
Amman-Jordan  
Fax 962 6 841348
- II. Outside Jordan:  
Offices of the Cultural Attaches at the Embassies of the Hashemite Kingdom abroad.

Terms and conditions for admission to the programme:

- Applicant should NOT be holder of the Jordanian citizenship.
- The Tawjihi Certificate (Science stream) or its equivalence with a grade point average of not less than 85%.
- An application fee of \$100.

Fees:

The annual fees for the programme are \$16,000 for the first three years and \$17,000 for the second three years distributed as follows:

The first three years (Basic Medical Sciences):

\$7 for the first and second semesters.

\$2 for the summer semester.

The second three years (Clinical Medical Sciences):

\$7 for the first and second semesters

\$3 for the summer semester

Miscellaneous fees:

\$187.5 per semester which cover health insurance, life insurance, library usage, etc.

## Government authorises floating \$100 million Jordanian sovereign bonds on world markets

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Council of Ministers Saturday decided to float sovereign bonds on world markets in order to attract foreign investors and repay some of the Kingdom's "commercial loans," Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs Jawad

Anani said. Dr. Anani said that the \$100 million worth bonds, which will be issued by the treasury, would be floated in a public tender and would be made available on the international bourses.

The minister told the Jordan Times that the reason behind this move was not "because the Kingdom was

in need of new loans. It is a symbol of trust in the Jordanian economy," especially after the positive reaction the Kingdom received from foreign investors when the Jordan Phosphate Co. floated its own bonds last month.

"The new move is a clear message to foreign investors who are willing to come to Jordan and look for shares

and bonds," Dr. Anani added.

"By these two moves we have entered the world market. We are planning to float JD50 million in bonds on the domestic market in the near future for local and foreign investors," the minister added without giving a date on the issuance of the bonds in local currency.

Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi told reporters following Saturday's Cabinet session that the period of floating is five years, and that interest will be paid in lump sum.

Dr. Mutawi added that the interest rate will be fixed according to global interest rates. He said foreign banks will be invited to take part in the tender to purchase these bonds.

The minister said the marketing of these bonds on the world markets should be completed by November 15. In other developments, Dr. Mutawi told reporters that upon a recommendation from the inner Cabinet, the Council of Ministers decided to speed up the work on the Disi Amman conveyer project, which would make additional water resources available to the capital.

He said that a tender for the project will be offered according to the build-operate-transfer contract (BOT) instead of the traditional tender method.

The Cabinet also decided that the pipelines used in this project should be Jordanian-made as a step towards encouraging national industry.

Dr. Mutawi said a committee comprised of the ministers of Trade, Industry and Supply, Finance, Water and Irrigation, and Public Works and Housing was formed to follow up the work of this project.

The \$420 million project will offer 100 million cubic metres (MCM) of additional water to the capital.

It consists of 310 kilometres of pipeline, 2,100 wells, reservoirs and four pumping stations to convey 120 MCM per year from the Disi aquifer to Amman and the southern governorates. Details of the project and the tender have been completed.

The minister said the cabinet also approved a proposal by the Minister of Trade, Industry and Supply Hani Mulki to establish a "technical committee" that would be responsible for the Kingdom's relations with the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Tickets Sold at:  
• THE PLACE  
• BOOKS @ CAFE  
• HOUSTON'S RESTAURANT  
• GENEVA HOTEL  
Tel. 5515903  
Tel. 650457  
Tel. 700810  
Tel. 858100  
• STALLIONS  
• GL. RHO. MA.  
• PHILADELPHIA HOTEL  
• SMASH HITS  
Tel. 812003  
Tel. 863624 / 644522  
Tel. 607100  
Tel. 5534402



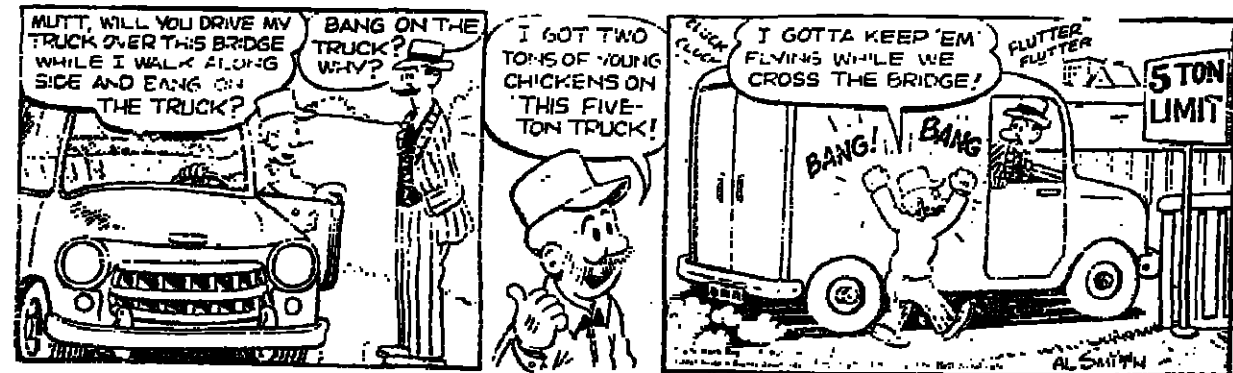
### Peanuts



### Andy Capp



### Mutt'n'Jeff



REUTERS

REUTERS

### The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	THB	INR
US Dollar	1.0000	1.8195	0.6216	1.5053	118.35	1.2338	1.7734	2.0488	6.1280
DE Mark	0.5499	1.0000	0.3413	0.8273	65.04	0.7657	1.0444	1.1280	3.3675
GB Sterling	1.6088	2.9210	1.0000	2.4008	188.16	2.2420	2.8317	3.2958	9.8587
CH Franc	0.6643	1.2030	0.4124	1.0000	76.59	0.9252	1.1774	1.3646	4.0685
JP Yen	0.0084	0.1737	0.0156	0.0127	1.0000	0.0084	0.0117	0.0136	0.0406
CA Dollar	0.7176	1.3047	0.4454	1.0794	1.18	1.2718	1.6880	1.9591	6.0341
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0254	0.3301	0.8048	1600.83	0.7854	1.154	1.3454	4.0344
NL Guilder	0.4881	0.8877	0.3031	0.7347	57.72	0.6799	0.8825	1.0000	2.9899
FR Franc	0.1632	0.2999	0.1014	0.2460	19.36	0.2274	0.2732	0.3120	0.9200

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	THB	INR
US Dollar	1.0000	1.8195	0.6216	1.5053	118.35	1.2338	1.7734	2.0488	6.1280
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	2.5593	0.8325	2.0408	165.04	1.9107	2.5593	2.8317	8.5887
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.4823	0.1657	0.4018	32.33	0.3885	0.5058	0.5791	1.7157
Bahrain Dinar	2.85	5.0980	1.8345	4.6087	388.25	4.5987	6.0341	6.8587	208.58
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.4945	0.1657	0.4018	32.33	0.3885	0.5058	0.5791	1.7157
Kuwait Dinar	3.2798	5.9101	2.0387	5.1415	417.21	4.6087	6.0341	6.8587	208.58
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.4928	0.1657	0.4018	32.33	0.3885	0.5058	0.5791	1.7157
Lebanese Lira	0.65	1.1623	0.4124	1.0000	76.59	0.9252	1.1774	1.3646	4.0685
Egyptian	0.2346	0.4208	0.1407	0.3525	28.35	0.3120	0.3952	0.4407	1.3244

Energy		
Oil	Barrel	Price
Brent	18.71	18.63
WTI	18.67	18.60
Bonny	18.71	18.63
Dubai	17.80	17.80
UL Gas	216.00	0.00

Mid-East Currencies		
Currency	USD	DEM
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4823
AE Dirham	0.4955	0.8952
KW Dinar	3.2798	5.9101
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.6799
CY Pound	1.8628	3.388

Metal Prices		
Metal	Spot	Offer
Gold (oz's)	325.75	326.25
Silver (oz's)	4.68	4.7
Platinum (oz's)	413	418
AL (3 Months)	1637	1640
CU (3 Months)	2184	2189
Zinc (3 Months)	1495	1500
Lead (3 Months)	637	642
Ni (3 Months)	6650	6680

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)		
Period	USD	DEM
1 Month	5.50	5.57
3 Months	7.13	7.06
6 Months	8.43	8.44
1 Year	9.56	9.56
2 Year	10.56	10.56
3 Year	11.56	11.56
4 Year	12.56	12.56
5 Year	13.56	13.56

Main Equity Indices		
Index	Value	Change
New York DOW JONES	7887.81	-4.04
New York S&P 500	923.54	-1.51
London FT-SE 100	4901.1	-1.54
Tokyo NIKKEI 225	16850.17	-508.95
Paris CAC 40	2904.23	-53
Frankfurt DAX	4088.01	-167.68

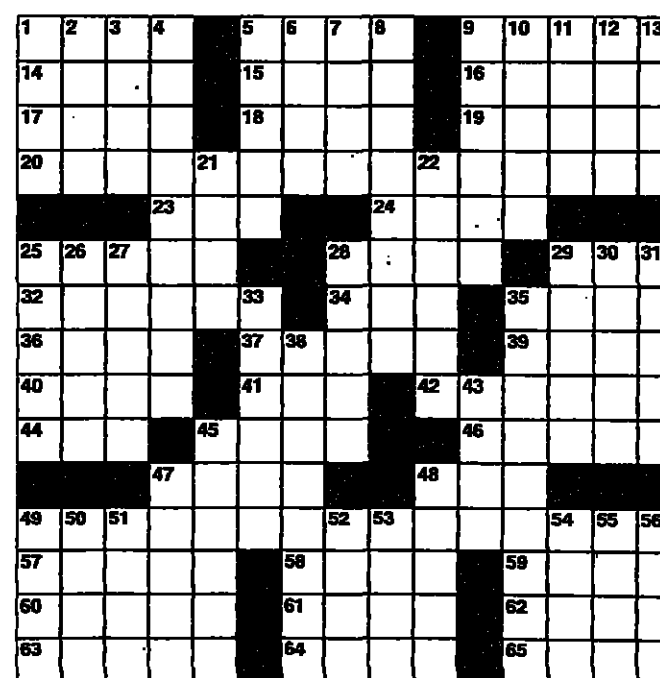
Energy		
Commodity	Unit	Price
Coffee (c/lbs)	172.5	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1828	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	347.9	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	139	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	22.57	Spot
Tea (kg/box)	185	Spot
Barley (\$/bush)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	450	Spot

JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	USD	DEM
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1365	1.1422
DE Mark	0.3885	0.3904
CH Franc	0.4767	0.4731
FR Franc	0.1154	0.116
JP Yen	0.5676	0.5606
NL Guilder	0.3451	0.3468
IT Lira	0.3988	0.4008

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

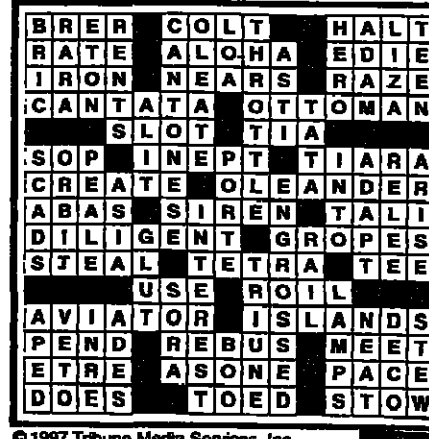
### THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS  
1 Trade  
5 Strike out  
9 "— People  
14 Play  
14 Slight elevation  
15 Gaelic  
16 Make amends  
17 Russian saint  
18 Phoned  
19 Culprit  
20 Betting on multiple entrants  
23 Boob tubes  
24 Hot spot  
25 — Beach (WWII invasion spot)  
28 Nail  
29 — Plaines, IL  
32 Boat basin  
34 Goal  
35 Negri of the silents  
36 Computer image  
37 "— Triste"  
39 Cafe au —  
40 Math branch  
41 Boxer of note  
42 Land  
44 Turf  
45 — gin  
46 U.S. president  
47 Collier kind  
48 Where its are made  
49 Taking great risk  
57 Linda of "Mel's Diner"  
58 Lose crispness  
59 Saharan  
60 Included with  
61 "I cannot tell"  
62 Othello's "friend"  
63 Zesty  
64 Calendar span  
65 Widen



by Alvin Becker

Puzzle solved:



- DOWN  
1 Do the mail  
2 Volition  
3 Pond plant  
4 Bauble  
5 Flowerless plants  
6 "To — and a bone..."

- 7 "— It  
8 Romantic?"  
9 Landed a fish  
10 Dined at home  
11 Underground pest  
12 Organic compound  
13 Transport with delight  
21 Lend of tennis  
22 Elusive one  
25 Leaves out  
26 Large, pref.  
27 Jack-in-the-pulpit type plant  
28 Contradict  
29 Factum  
30 Upper crust  
31 Lecher  
33 Island of Arthurian legend  
35 Obeys the rules  
38 "It's — to Tipperary"  
43 Outline sharply

- 45 Parsimonious  
47 Ogling  
48 Aquatic animal  
49 Land map  
50 Dalai —  
51 The Bard's river

- 52 Artifice  
53 Hip bones  
54 Dies —  
55 Baltic capital  
56 Ancient kingdom

### HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 24, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Richter Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Follow your uncanny intuition regarding home affairs and seek the advice of your mate before making any final decisions. Discuss these ideas with him or her. The days ahead can look brighter if you have the right attitude.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) This is a good day today to find out exactly what allies will do to help you gain your aims, so discuss the situation with them. Be enthused with the prospect of participating in recreational activities with close friends.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Get the right data which is necessary to impress those from whom you want backing. Find channels to get your ideas across and make the effort to seek knowledgeable people who are willing to provide you with the answers.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) Use some creative ability you possess today and handle the details of such career activities more precisely. Serve someone well you are fond of by doing something special which they would not expect and can be well received.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Study seriously today and know what your true purpose is in life. State your aims honestly and clearly to those who can be of great assistance. Keep away from crowds later this evening and spend quality time with your loved ones.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Study the philosophy of life which interests you most. Let knowledgeable people know what decisions you have made. Show your good character towards those people whom you find helpful and make the best use of their advice.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Concentrate on the best manner today to handle monetary and property matters for the days ahead. Write down your ideas so you won't forget them and seek out the advice of experts if you discover that you have any difficulties.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Recheck your personal aims today so that they become more realistic. Stop all that wishful thinking and become more active with the lives of your loved ones. Drive carefully while on the highway later this evening.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Get together quietly with experts who can assist you in career activities. The evening is fine for seeing good past close friends and being happy with them. This is a good time for you to meet with fellow associates on a new project.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Visit with long-time friends who are reliable and whom you can discuss any difficulties with. State your private terms, and seek advice. Much pleasure can come your way tonight, so spend this time with your loved ones.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Put your thinking cap on today and study a new outlet through which you can become more successful. See your friends later this evening and participate in recreational activities which everyone will find enjoyable.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) You are anxious to make some radical changes today, however, wait for a better day to do this. Study your systems of operation and learn how to improve them, thereby you can be quite successful in the days ahead.

**Birthstone of August:** Peridot — Golden Quartz

Business

More

By Samir G. Jordan Times Staff

The Jordan Press For...  
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# More Jordanian companies announce mid-year financial results

By Samir Ghawi  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

**AMMAN** — The Jordan Press Foundation Company boosted its net profit by 80 per cent to JD1.14 million at the end of this year's first half from JD0.64 million posted at the end of 1996's first half.

Having earned a JD4.58 million during the first half of 1997 (JD4.44 million in 1996) the company's gross profit stood at JD1.52 million (JD980,000) before being lowered by depreciation, administrative and general costs.

Lower raw material inventory and spare parts was the main factor behind current assets dropping from JD6.60 million to JD5.98 million at the end of last June. However, the balance of cash on hand and at banks increased to JD1.1 million.

By adding the JD6.62 million net value of fixed assets to

the current portion, total assets stood at JD12.59 million.

The company, which publishes the Arabic daily Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times repaid about JD1 million of bank debts during the first six months of this year and also lowered the balance of the long-term loan.

As such, the current liabilities fell from JD2.69 million at the end of June 1996 to JD1.41 million at the end of June 1997.

Shareholders' equity went up by about JD0.6 million to reach JD10.94 million at the end of last June.

## The Jordan International Trading Centre

From JD3.43 million of sales, the company was able to raise a JD252,397 gross profit which turned into a net profit of JD57,187 when general, selling and administrative costs were taken into account.

Of the total assets which amounted to JD5.78 million at the end of last June, JD4.35 million were current assets.

Most of the current assets were inventory and receivables as they amounted to JD1.72 million and JD1.69 million respectively. In addition, the company listed JD0.6 million in cash on hand and at banks as well as investments at cost in shares of local companies for a total of JD1.22 million.

Current liabilities, totalling JD2.05 million, were mainly debts to the Jordan Islamic Bank. As to the shareholders' equity, the total stood at JD3.73 million, of which JD3.40

was the company's capital.

## The Arab German Insurance Company

The JD222,962 loss posted by the company during the period from March 11, 1996 until Dec. 31, 1996 was turned into a JD177,229 profit during the first half of this year.

Total assets which amounted to JD4.23 million was mostly cash and deposits at banks and various investments in addition to around JD1 million of receivables.

Current liabilities totalling JD0.69 million, technical reserves amounted to JD1.09 million and shareholders' equity were JD2.45 million noting that the paid-up capital is only 50 per cent of the company's JD5 million authorised capital.

## The National Portfolio Securities Company

The company narrowed its losses after posting a JD0.38 million loss during the first six months of this year compared to a JD1.2 million loss posted during the same period of 1996.

Of the JD8.44 million total current assets at the end of last June (JD9.38 million in 1996), the securities portfolio was valued at JD7.47 million after taking the necessary allocation for price decline.

A decline was registered in the current liabilities which

fell by about JD700,000 to JD1.54 million, mainly as a result of lower debts to banks.

Noting that by the June 30, 1997, the company's total accumulated losses stood at around JD3 million, the net shareholders' equity has declined from JD7.71 million to JD7.25 million.

The company, which operates as a broker at the Amman Financial Market, has a JD5 million registered capital and its equity includes a statutory reserves and an insurance premium for a total of JD4.97 million.

## The Jordan Financial Investments Company

The earnings of the company improved during the first half of this year as a result of higher income from interest and investment returns. As such, earnings climbed from JD47,560 at the end of June 1996 to JD101,063 at the end of last year.

At around JD7.09 million, the total assets remained nearly the same in both period but the change was significant in the different items. In this regard, cash on hand and at banks increased from JD0.47 million to JD1.34 million whereas the balance of the securities portfolio dropped from JD2.22 million to JD1.81 million.

Other changes include a rise in the volume of stakes in companies from JD1.59 million to JD2.27 million and a decline in land and real estate investment from JD2.29 million to JD1.23 million.

Bank credits increased by JD300,000 and that led to a rise in total liabilities from JD196,689 to JD348,057.

Taking into consideration that the company's paid-up capital amounts to JD6.55 million out of a registered JD7.5 million capital. The shareholders' equity totalled JD6.9 million (JD6.74 million in 1996).

## Tobacco giant may halt cigarette production if cancer link proven

MIAMI (AFP) — The head of the world's largest cigarette maker, Philip Morris, said Thursday his company would halt production if given proof that smoking causes lung cancer.

If confronted with proof that cigarettes cause lung cancer, "I'd probably say, sure I'd shut it down instantly to get a better hold on things," Geoffrey Bible, chairman and CEO of Philip Morris, said in a deposition.

Lawyer Ron Motley, who videotaped Mr. Bible's deposition in West Palm Beach, Florida, described the tobacco executive's testimony as "remarkable" and unprecedented.

"He certainly is the first tobacco executive to say anything like this," Mr. Motley told AFP by telephone.

But a company attorney said Mr. Bible's comments do not contain any new admissions that could be used in court.

"The company has said for years that cigarette smoking is a risk factor for human disease," said Michael York, a Philip Morris attorney working on the trial.

Mr. Motley is acting as an independent counsel whose firm represents 30 government entities in the southern state of Florida that have brought lawsuits against the tobacco industry.

Mr. Bible's deposition was part of Florida's Medicaid suit that began several weeks ago. The state is suing to recover billions of dollars it said it

spent to treat poor people with smoking-related diseases.

Mr. Bible also conceded the possibility that smoking cigarettes may play a role in the deaths of as many as 100,000 people annually.

The centres for disease control and prevention in Atlanta, Georgia, says that deaths due to smoking total 419,000 annually, or one-fifth of all deaths in the United States.

Branch, Cabell analyst Steve Marascia said that while the reported comments appeared surprising, he doubted whether any pre-trial comments could have meaningful implications in terms of a proposed settlement between the tobacco industry and U.S. states.

"The final decision is going to be important," Mr. Marascia said.

"But in the short-term, the issue of the White House's role in the settlement's go-ahead is the greater issue."

The White House has yet to decide whether to approve the watershed deal under which the industry would accept tough government regulation of cigarettes and, over 25 years, pay \$368.5 billion in damages to defray public costs of smoking-related illnesses.

In exchange, dozens of U.S. states would drop their lawsuits against the industry, future class-action suits would be prohibited, and awards from individual suits would be capped at an aggregate \$5 billion yearly.

## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

## Jordanian bank to circulate \$8m worth of CDs worldwide

**\*\* THE ARAB** Jordan Investment Bank will circulate \$8 million worth of certificate of deposits (CDs) worldwide, the first such by a Jordanian financial institution. A bank statement said the issue will be signed Sept. 15 and the certificates will be circulated for one year jointly with Paris-based Banque Paribas, London's British Arab Commercial Bank and Cairo's Misr International Bank.

Khalid Masri, the bank's investment manager, said the issue "is a way to increase our sources of longer term foreign currency liabilities." He said the certificates will be marketed internationally by the bank's shareholder, the Arab Investment Co., which is based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Masri said the issue is being arranged by the company's offshore banking unit in Bahrain. The bank was Jordan's first investment institution and was set up in 1978 by Arab, Gulf and Jordanian businessmen. It is the sixth largest bank in terms of assets in the country.

## Two new wharfs to be built at Aqaba port

**\*\* THE GOVERNMENT** plans to build two new docks in the Red Sea port of Aqaba to handle an anticipated increase in cargo traffic following the 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

A Transport Ministry statement said two new wharfs will be built alongside the port's only existing dock. Construction will end in the year 2000 at an envisaged cost of \$36 million.

It said one of the berths will have a maximum capacity of 2,500 tonnes per hour and will be mainly used for industrial cargo. The second, with a capacity of 500 tonnes, will be a multipurpose berth that will handle other cargo, including livestock imports.

The government believes that cargo bound for Aqaba will increase once the U.N. economic embargo against Iraq is lifted, the statement said. Jordan's recent peace with Israel also is expected to result in traffic being diverted to Aqaba, it said.

Iraqi trade through Aqaba dwindled following the 1990 Gulf crisis over Kuwait and the ensuing international sanctions on Iraq. Pre-1990 figures show that more than 70 per cent of cargo handled in Aqaba was bound for Iraq.

## THE BETTER HALF. By Giesbergen



"Dear, when I grow up I want to be just like you."

## JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

WE'RE OFF TO A GOOD START

KRUMY

VEYON

THYFOR

TEENAG

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: EPOCH NEEDY TRUSTY ORATOR  
Answer: When Junior broke the vase she was SHATTERED

# JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDANIAN  
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607175  
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 23/08/1997

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
298.000	221.250	ARAB BANK	13.5	1.36	14	300	87740	290.00	294.00	4.00
1.340	1.480	JOB. NATIONAL BK.	8.5	0.00	3	27903	58225	1.99	1.97	-0.02
2.480	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.5	7.38	4	5000	11490	2.21	2.25	0.04
5.200	4.500	THE HOUSING BK.	14.2	4.08	15	11379	53590	4.75	4.75	-
4.050	3.480	JOB. ISLAMIC BANK	15.7	1.15	17	9310	35781	3.82	3.85	0.03
3.800	3.000	JOB. INV. FID. BANK	20.6	0.00	4	551	1763	3.25	3.20	-0.05
2.440	1.000	BEIT AL-FOL. (BEITRA)	1.6	14.56	2	150	154	1.05	1.03	-0.02
BANK SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 216.02		CHNG: +0.97		80	54523	245834				
2.230	1.590	JOB. FRENCH INST.	5.1	8.38	2	1500	2705	1.80	1.79	-0.01
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 114.69		CHNG: -0.05		2	1500	2705				
1.820	1.810	JOB. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.1	5.95	21	7699	13942	1.69	1.68	-0.01
3.050	2.150	SHIPPING LINES	16.4	4.61	1	100	582	2.80	2.82	0.02
1.550	0.930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	16	12000	16715	1.39	1.38	-0.01
8.830	6.750	ALARA	12.1	7.41	1	100	675	6.75	6.75	-
1.870	1.150	MID. EAST HOTELS	19.8	0.00	5	2850	3705	1.30	1.30	-
3.720	2.890	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	8.5	0.00	13	5976	19349	3.25	3.28	0.03
1.220	0.930	ZAKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	1	500	500	0.99	1.00	0.01
2.230	1.430	UNITED CO.	8.4	6.25	12	12450	21952	1.78	1.76	-0.02
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 111.45		CHNG: -0.05		70	41678	76120				
4.450	3.220	JOB. CEMENT FACT.	26.5	2.80	21	6118	24083	3.98	3.93	-0.05
4.140	2.750	JOB. PHOSPHATE MINES	10.8	2.57	2	200	779	3.90	3.89	-0.01
7.000	5.700	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.2	3.28	5	420	2569	6.25	6.10	-1.15
10.250	9.070	JOB. PETROL. REFINERY	9.9	8.73	31	1345	13695	10.15	10.18	0.03
4.250	2.040	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	11.4	4.85	14	2972	12269	4.25	4.12	-0.03
1.800	1.300	JOB. PAPER MANF.	16.7	0.15	5	1175	1527	1.31	1.30	-0.01
10.250	5.000	ARAB CHEM. DIST.	17.9	5.13	4	171	1000	5.85	5.85	-
5.650	4.300	DAR ALDAMA DV. INV.	13.2	4.63	8	6800	36720	5.40	5.40	-
3.850	2.310	ARAB ALUM. IND.	10.9	5.35	10	5079	16029	2.32	2.28	-0.04
0.960	0.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.2	0.00	7	4300	2064	0.48	0.48	-
1.290	1.000	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	31.2	0.00	3	1250	1275	1.03	1.02	-0.01
0.770	0.510	NATIONAL INDS.	9	0.00	6	9025	4602	0.52	0.51	-0.01
1.200	0.510	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	9	0.00	11	6300	9576	0.86	0.87	0.01
3.000	2.130	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MPAC	34.8	0.00	4	450	980	2.28	2.17	-0.11
0.920	0.380	JOB. SILICO. CHEM.	9	0.00	11	7750	4675	0.62	0.60	-0.02
1.670	1.120	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	16.7	5.34	10	1550	2064	1.34	1.31	-0.03
1.970	1.080	UNIV. MOD. INDS.	9	0.00	22	8800	11293	1.29	1.29	-
1.510	0.940	JOB. INDS. RESOURCES	12.6	10.64	17	3387	3183	0.95	0.94	-0.01
1.520	1.300	NATL. CEMENT	14.0	4.70	23	9278	13023	1.52	1.49	-0.03
1.070	0.810	JOB. NEW CABLE CO.	15.8	0.00	15	5050	4343	0.86	0.86	-
2.090	1.340	EV. RAY READY WEAR	52.8	0.00	1	250	375	1.52	1.50	-0.02
1.130	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	10.9	0.00	30	16700	19564	1.15	1.19	0.04
1.190	0.860	UNION CH. & VEG.	45.0	0.00	3	311	308	1.01	0.99	-0.02
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 121.43		CHNG: -1.38		262	100771	181505				
GRAND TOTAL										
INDEX: 164.86		CHNG: 0.00		414	198469	506164				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 23/08/1997										
650	400	JOB. TRADE FAC.	10.9	0.00	9	13750	5638	0.41	0.41	-
950	540	JOB. TIR. INV. CO.	9	0.00	12	15683	8749	0.66	0.66	-
840	660	UNION INV. SOV.	9	0.00	6	25400	5080	0.70	0.70	-
570	370	ARAB PIV. INVEST.	9	0.00	25	43222	16166	0.40	0.39	-0.01
950	720	AL-SABAO INV. CO.	9	0.00	9	10000	4200	0.85	0.85	-
950	610	AL-DAMAYAR 752	71.0	0.00	24	57804	28334	0.73	0.74	0.01
480	200	JOB. INDS. MATCH-JENCO	9	0.00	1	500	130	0.27	0.26	-0.01
740	510	ARAB FOOD	9	0.00	1	1000	9002	0.92	0.92	-
570	380	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	47.2	0.00	9	5877	2410	0.42	0.40	-0.02
750	400	NATL. MULT. ENG. RAMICO	9	0.00	21	32550	15299	0.47	0.47	-
960	500	READY MIX CONCRETE	10.9	0.00	1	10000	9000	0.91	0.90	-0.01
820	710	ARAB TEXT.	6.34	0.00	1	1000	817	0.76	0.76	-
580	430	ARAB ELECT. INDS.	9	0.00	2	367	186	0.50	0.51	0.01
730	580	HIDESTAY PHARM. 752	8	0.00	5	2850	1112	0.64	0.64	-
670	550	RAI PHARM. 851	8	0.00	2	1100	521	0.61	0.61	-
570	320	INDS. ENG.	9	0.00	5	2250	743	0.33	0.33	-
860	730	INDS. CERAMIC	19.1	0.00	2	1000	117	0.73	0.73	-
820	590	IND. POLYESTER	9	0.00	10	660	4208	0.68	0.68	-
W 1.000	730	NAT. ALUMINIUM. 752	97.4	0.00	81	144883	67181	0.74	0.70	-0.04
W 1.020	720	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	97.1	0.00	5	977	752	0.77	0.77	-
860	590	WID. ELEC. COMPLEX	7.5	16.39	15	12100	7469	0.63	0.63	-0.02
GRAND TOTAL										
INDEX: 164.86		CHNG: 0.00		266	448346	230673				

W: New 12 months low

W: Listed during the past 12 months

P: P/E ratio is 100 or more

N: Negative P/E

W: Warning is rose or W/A for the most recent year



# Popov clinches gold in 50-freestyle, Pankratov out of 200 butterfly

SEVILLE, Spain (AP) — Alexander Popov, out to reclaim his title as swimming's top sprinter after being stabbed a year ago, swam the world's second fastest time this year in the 50-freestyle, clocking 22.57 seconds Saturday in the prelims of the European Swimming Championships.

Popov, who has already won gold in the 100 freestyle in his first big meet since winning double gold in the Atlanta Olympics, cruised at the end when it looked like he could have gone faster.

Julien Sicot, a 19-year-old Frenchman from Martinique who trains in Bourdeaux, was second in 22.76 with third for Denis Pimankov of Russia in 22.89.

Popov, 25, was stabbed in the stomach on Aug. 24, 1996, in a skirmish in Moscow with a watermelon vendor just weeks after repeating his Olympic double gold from the '92 Barcelona Olympics.

Only Ricardo Busquets of Puerto Rico and William Pilczuk of the United States have gone faster this season (22.42). Jiang Cheng of China has also clocked 22.57.

Another Russian had a bad day.

Denis Pankratov, the defending Olympic and European champion and world record-holder, failed to qualify for Saturday's 200-metre butterfly final.

Pankratov, who managed only sixth place in the 100 fly, clocked 2:01.25 for 11th place — far off his world record of 1:55.22.

Pankratov, who has been racing almost non-stop since the Olympics and has



Russian swimmer Alexander Popov in action during the men's 50M event heats sessions during the European Swimming Championships. Popov set the best time clocking 22.57 prior to the final later in the day (Reuters photo).

the top 200 butterfly time this season in Europe (1:57.33), complained of being tired after the 100 final and said he should have skipped the Europeans.

Franck Esposito of France led the top eight qualifiers to the finals in a time of 1:58.58 with second for Denis Silantiev of Ukraine in 1:59.06 and third for Chris-Carl Bremer of Germany in 1:59.88.

"I knew right from the start Pankratov was out of it because his first stretch under water was too short," said Esposito, the 200 bronze medalist in the '92 Olympics.

In the women's 200-metre medley, Martina Moravcova of Slovakia qualified first in 2:16.57 with Susan Rolph of Britain second in 2:17.08 with third for Sabine Herbst of Germany in 2:17.48.

Moravcova has already won two silver medals in the 100 freestyle and 100 butterfly and was fourth in the 200 freestyle.

In the men's 100 backstroke, Ethan Urbach of Israel had the top time of 55.96 with 55.98 for Mariusz Siemba of Poland and 56.21 for Martin Lopez Zubero of Spain.

Lopez Zubero, 28, the

former Olympic champion and defending world champion in the 100 backstroke, is going for his fifth European gold. He said if he doesn't win here he may retire before the World Championships in January in Perth, Australia.

In the women's 400 medley relay, Germany qualified first in 4:12.00 with second for Russia (4:12.60) and third for the Netherlands (4:13.68).

The top three spots in the men's 1,500 freestyle — with the final set for Sunday — were: Emiliano Brembilla of Italy (15:10.65), Igor Snitko of Ukraine (15:15.71) and Ian

Wilson of Britain (15:23.22).

Ireland's Michelle Smith, entered under the surname of her husband — Erik De Bruin — has won gold in the 400 IM and 200 freestyle and silver in the 400 freestyle, but she withdrew from Saturday's 200 IM, citing fatigue and leaving only the 200 butterfly to swim when the 12-day meet ends Sunday.

The withdrawal means she will be unable to match the record of four individual golds in the Euros set by former East German Ute Geweniger in 1981 and Hungary's Krisztina Egerszegi in 1993.

## Villeneuve improves title hopes with pole success

SPA-FRANCOR-CHAMPS, Belgium (AFP) — Jacques Villeneuve hopes of overtaking Michael Schumacher at the top of the driver's championship were given a major boost here Saturday when he took pole position for the Belgian Grand Prix.

The Canadian, who is only three points behind Schumacher with six races left, dominated qualifying for Sunday's race as he claimed his seventh pole of the season and 10th of his 28-race career.

"With just three points between us in the championship and six races left it could go either way so it's important we work hard in tomorrow's race," said Villeneuve.

"I am very happy with pole and the car is looking very good for the race. From the first lap it was great — I just hope it stays dry."

"I was really pushing it at the end because I wasn't sure what the others were doing," he added.

Benetton's Jean Alesi, who is looking for a drive

for next season, put himself alongside Villeneuve on the front row.

Schumacher in the Ferrari was third fastest.

Villeneuve was only briefly knocked off pole by Alesi before reclaiming it on his second run with 0.3 secs to spare.

The French-Canadian will now be looking to press home his advantage in the 44-lap race as he finished with nearly a second in hand over Schumacher who has looked uncompetitive throughout the weekend.

The German, who has won three times on the track just 40 miles from his hometown of Kerpen, saw his chances of snatching pole late on when he ran out of fuel on his final lap.

Mika Hakkinen in the McLaren overcame a horrific 200mph crash during the morning's unofficial practice to get on the third row.

Hakkinen, told Yesterday that he was being retained by McLaren-Mercedes for next season, slammed into

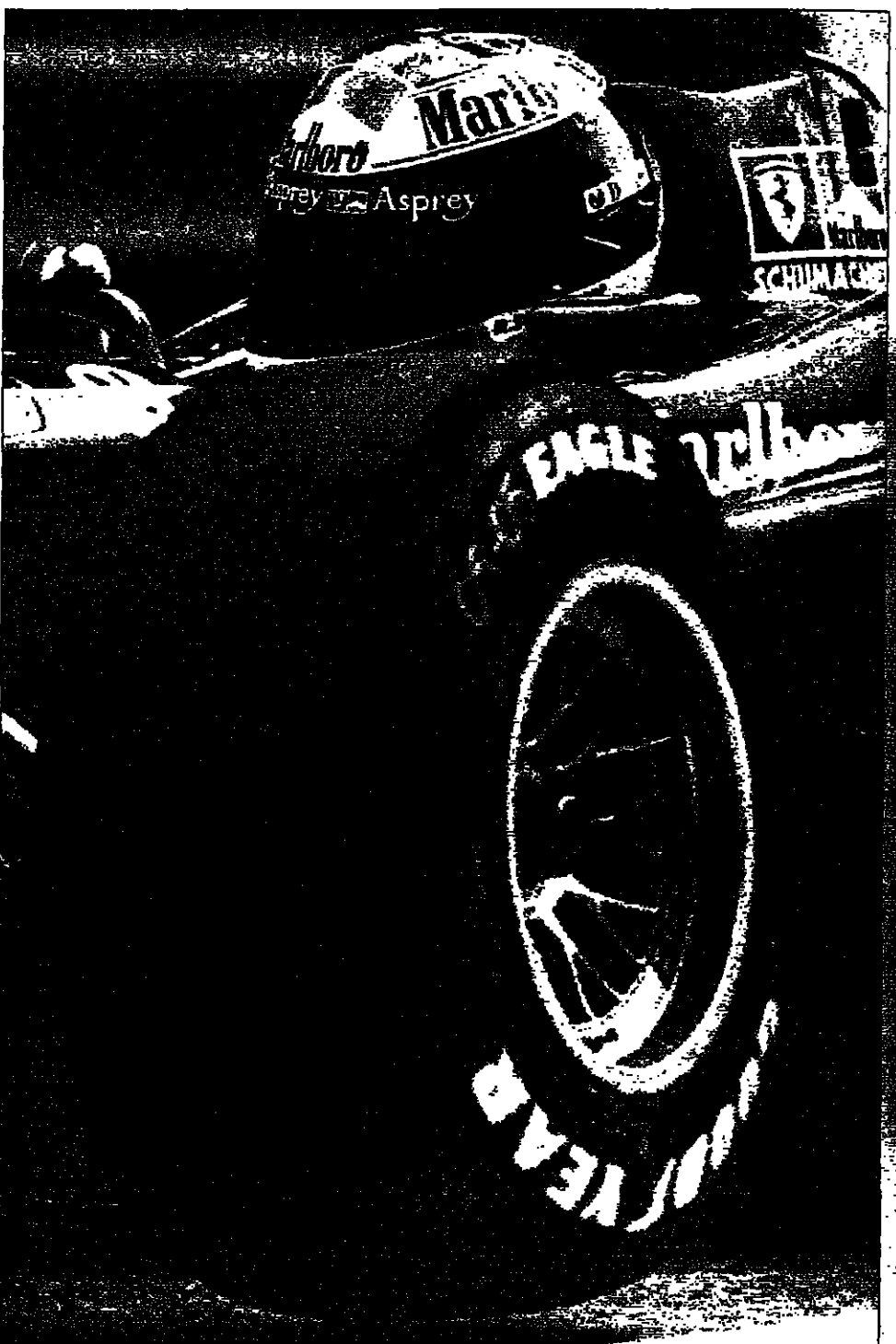
a guard-rail after the left rear tyre of his car suddenly shot-off.

The 28-year-old managed to scramble out of the car before lying down near the Les Combes section of the circuit while waiting to be taken to the medical centre for a mandatory check-up.

Hakkinen miraculously escaped from a similar high-speed accident at the Adelaide Grand Prix at the end of the 1995 season, but was forced to spend a month in an Australian hospital recuperating.

Defending world champion Damon Hill managed to put his Arrows on the fifth row but the Englishman was embarrassed by the fact that his teammate Pedro Diniz finished on the fourth row.

The 36-year-old Hill is trying to find a top drive for next season in his attempt to get back with a winning team and Diniz finishing ahead of him will have done nothing to help his cause.



German Formula One driver Michael Schumacher takes part in the second free practice session at the Belgian Grand Prix in Spa Francorchamps, southern Belgium (Reuters photo)

## Ludwig, Maylander take pole position for Suzuka race

SUZUKA, Japan (AFP) — German driver Bernd Maylander pushed his Mercedes to the fastest time on Saturday to take the pole position for the Suzuka 1,000-kilometre endurance race this weekend.

Maylander, teaming up with fellow German Klaus Ludwig, timed 1min 56.023secs on the 5.86 kilometres (3.64-mile) Suzuka circuit course in the qualifying practice.

The French-British team of Pedro Lamy, Allan McNish and Yannick

Dalmas took the second starting position for their Porsche 911 GT1, with the Frenchman scoring a time of 1:56.039.

A Mercedes team of Bernd Schneider of Germany, Alexander Wurz of Austria and Japan's Aguri Suzuki took the third position, followed by the Mercedes duo of Alessandro Nannini of Italy and Marcel Tiemann of Germany.

The Suzuka round is the seventh leg of the 11-round FIA Grand Touring Championship series.

## Ethiopia's sporting refugees make the running

*Ethiopia's international sportsmen and women are setting records by seeking political asylum in ever greater numbers.*

By Phil Minshull

LONDON — Ethiopia's nervousness about the World Cross Country Championships arises not from anxiety about the athletes' performances, but from fears that their track stars will fail to show up when it is time to go home.

Ethiopian sportsmen and women are regularly using sporting trips abroad as a chance to seek political asylum.

Six soccer players defected on a stop-over in Rome while on the way to Morocco to contest a 1994 World Cup qualifying match.

The match went ahead, but turned into farce, with Ethiopia taking the field with a team that included two reserve goalkeepers and an overweight, 40-year-old assistant coach, who lasted only 10 minutes.

One by one, other players followed his example until only six players were left, and, with 20 minutes to go and Morocco leading 5-0, the referee abandoned the match and awarded the game to Morocco.

Some of the players who stayed behind in Italy eventually turned up playing amateur soccer there and in Britain, although none ever got professional contracts.

Later that year, Kassa Tadesse, the world junior half-marathon champion, excused himself from the rest of the squad at London's Heathrow airport and sought political asylum in Britain.

At the 1995 World Cross Country Championships in north-east England, three Ethiopian athletes and a coach disappeared at dead of night and boarded a train for London. For more than a month, nothing was heard of them. Eventually, they tried to compete in a London race, but were barred from taking part by an angry Ethiopian athletics federation, via the International Amateur Athletics Federation, who learned from the media that they were planning to run again.

At last year's World Junior Athletics Championships in Sydney, another four runners sought asylum in Australia, and in January, there was a remarkable repetition of a previous group defection. The soccer team were once more off to visit Morocco — this time for an African Nations' Cup match — and again had to go via Rome.

This time, nearly the entire squad decided to seek asylum in Italy, where their fate is still being decided.

Besides these cases, several runners have sought asylum in Holland and Norway.

Among them is international marathon man Tekeye Gebrselassie, brother of multiple world record holder Haile Gebrselassie.

Many of those who have used their sporting prowess as a vehicle to seek asylum come from the Amhara ethnic group, the elite caste during the eras of both Emperor Haile Selassie and the brutal Dergue regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam.

The refugees accuse the present Tigrayan-led government, which overthrew Mengistu in 1991, of perpetrating the same crimes as its predecessor, but specifically against the Amhara, who comprise nearly a third of the Ethiopian population.

"Everyone thinks that it is OK in Ethiopia, now that we have a democratic government, but it is not OK," said Almaz Wondeferhu, the coach who was one of the four to leave their team-mates at the World Cross Country Championship in England two years ago.

"We were threatened and told to stop following our political beliefs," she added.

It was no easy decision for Wondeferhu. She left a husband and two children back in Ethiopia, and, after deciding to stay in England, spent many months wondering whether she had done the right thing.

However, the fear that worse might be about to befall them because of their views conquered all trepidation about being far from their families.

"It would have been too dangerous for us to go back home," said Berhane Dagne, fifth in the 1995 World Cross Country Championship junior race and part of the silver medal-winning team.

Like the other members of the quartet, members of Dagne's family have been imprisoned without trial at home, and she

could see a time when her accolades would not prevent the police from coming to take her as well.

Even Haile Gebrselassie, who splits his time between Ethiopia and his European training base in Holland, fears for what might happen if he spoke out about human rights abuses.

"It's too sensitive. I don't want to say anything," said the Olympic 10,000 metres champion.

Using sporting trips to seek political asylum is not the sole preserve of Ethiopians. In a high-profile incident just before last year's Atlanta Olympics, two of Cuba's boxing gold-medal hopefuls asked for asylum in the United States, while a regular stream of Cuban baseball players have sought a new life in the U.S.

Nor is it a new phenomenon. In the days when eastern Europe was under Communist rule, there were regular defections from East to West, notably the Czech-born tennis star, Martina Navratilova.

Nevertheless, Ethiopians are presently the most numerous sporting refugees.

Cynics have argued that the vast numbers seeking asylum is more to do with trying to find a better life overseas.

But most have arrived in their adopted homeland with only a smattering of the local language. They have generally had to survive on local state welfare hand-outs — hardly ideal for international sportsmen and women.

In addition, they all have to endure lengthy periods of uncertainty, not knowing whether they will be allowed to stay or be deported.

Dagne heard only in February, after applying for asylum nearly two years ago, that she would be permitted to remain in Britain for another four years.

However, because the British Home Office treats each case individually, the other three who sought asylum at the same time as her must continue to await a decision.

"Ultimately, I'm still an Ethiopian and I would like to go back to Ethiopia to see my friends and family, but I cannot do that while the present government is still there. And I suspect that will be a very long time," sighs Dagne — Gemini News Service.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144  
**PHILADELPHIA "1"**  
Steven Spielberg's  
**THE LOST WORLD (JURASSIC PARK)**  
Starring: Jeff Goldblum & Julian Moore  
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144  
**PHILADELPHIA "2"**  
Jim Carrey ... in  
**LIAR LIAR**  
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238  
**PLAZA**  
Tom Bringer ... in  
**THE SUBSTITUTE**  
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420  
**CONCORD**  
The movie event of the summer is here  
Arnold Schwarzenegger ... in  
**BATMAN & ROBIN**  
(12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30)  
CONCORD "2"  
**ACE VENTURA 1**  
Shows: 3:30, 6:00 only

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The satirical play  
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The theatre is closed every Friday.  
For reservations call 625155

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## NFL teams trade players ahead of season kickoff

GREEN BAY, Wisconsin (AP) — The Green Bay Packers' decisions on Roster Cuts Sunday will determine whether long snapper Harper Le Bel makes the team.

Le Bel, who has made long snapping an art form in his eight seasons in the NFL, was acquired by the Packers as an unrestricted free agent on March 31 after six seasons with the Atlanta Falcons.

Despite the Packers' concerns on special teams — the one unit that has lots of question marks, from who will be the kick returners to who will be the kicker when the season opens on Sept. 1 — Le Bel's services might be more of a luxury than a necessity.

He could be the odd man out, for instance, if the Packers choose to keep two kickers instead of one or five running backs instead of four. In which case, he's pretty sure he could hook up with another team.

"I know every team needs a long snapper and there are guys here who can do it, too," Le Bel said. "Regardless, this is a good team and there's some incredible athletes here. They'll be very successful with whatever decision they make."

"I just hope I'm a part of it."

If not, his duties may fall on 12-year veteran offensive Lineman Dellenbaugh — if he makes the team.

Dellenbaugh said he'd be glad to be the long snapper for kicks and punts if the Packers so ask.

"I have no problem with that," he said. "Harper's a great snapper. It's just going to be a numbers decision, who knows what's going to happen?"

### Cowboys

Deion Sanders, wearing a diamond-encrusted gold cross necklace and professing he has found peace in his life, showed up at the Dallas Cowboys' practice field Thursday and announced, "have no fear, Deion is here."

It was a whirlwind visit by Sanders on his off day from baseball duties with the Cincinnati Reds. It included meetings with defensive coaches, a physical examination, hugs and jokes with his teammates and a remarkable news conference about religion, divorce, baseball and football.

Sanders said his back is still sore, but he plans on opening the season with the Cowboys on Aug. 31 at Pittsburgh and will include punt returning among his duties.

He will continue to play baseball for the Reds as much as the bulging disk in his back allows.

His looming divorce was "a blessing because I was able to look in a mirror and change things" and that someday he will become either an evangelist or a pastor.

### Chargers

San Diego, already missing injured all-pro junior Seau until sometime in September, will have just one starter from its corps of line-backers when it plays Minnesota tonight.

New Chargers coach Kevin Gilbride said Lew Bush wants to play, but will probably stay in for just one quarter. Kurt Gouveia will rest his injured shoulder.

"I'm a little gun-shy with all the injuries we've got," Gilbride said. Running back Gary Brown also will miss the game with a sprained knee, defensive end William Fuller, who hurt his right knee 10 days ago, will probably play just one quarter.

### 49ers

Defensive end Marvin Washington, released earlier in the preseason after eight seasons with the New York Jets, signed a one-year contract with San Francisco.

Washington will be used as a backup to ends Chris Doleman and Roy Barker.

"He's got a big body," defensive coordinator John Marshall said. "He's a big-sized guy. He can move his feet. He runs very well and he's played tough. What we saw was a good solid backup player that can give us some depth and strength on the defensive line."

### Broncos

A local board voted in favour of a new stadium for the Broncos, a decision that could go before Denver-area voters in May or November 1998.

Seven of nine board members present at a meeting heard six presentations, five in favour of building a new stadium and one in favour of renovating mile high stadium.

After weighing new construction vs. renovation, the board unanimously agreed a new stadium would be more cost-effective.

Broncos owner Pat Bowlen, who argued for a stadium ballot initiative before the legislature in 1996, would not comment.

### Rams

St. Louis coach Dick Vermeil can't stop praising Orlando Pace.

"Our defensive ends pass rush on him and he reaches out and jams them with those long arms. It straightens them right up," Vermeil said Thursday of his Rookie left tackle, the top pick in the NFL draft. "He's impressive."

Pace, who began practice this week after a long holdout, said he's ready to make his debut in an exhibition game tonight, when the Rams play the Kansas City Chiefs.

"It's exciting," he said. "I'm picking up the offense quick, and hopefully everything is working out well."

## Blood tests to be used at World Track Cycling Championships

SYDNEY (AP) — Sydney's Olympic Games drug squad will keep a close watch on the World Cycling Championships starting Aug. 27 as they prepare for the possible introduction of blood testing at the 2000 Olympics.

Cycling authorities will use blood samples to test competitors for the killer drug erythropoietin (EPO).

The International Olympic Committee has raised the possibility of blood testing at board level, but is yet to rule on its future.

SOCOG's chief doping officer Nicki Vance said she would be prepared for its introduction.

The Perth World Championships will be the first time blood testing has been undertaken in Australia and the first time on track cyclists. It is a continuing initiative of cycling's world governing body, UCI, started this year with dawn tests on road riders on the European circuit.

Vance described the issue of blood testing as one requiring a moral rather than scientific decision by the IOC because of the possibility that some may object to it on religious grounds.

"There's been some research done and it appears from my reading that Jehovah's witnesses may be the only group that have a problem with blood testing," Vance said recently.

But Peter Price, a director at the Australian headquarters of Jehovah's witnesses said Friday that

Vance had got it wrong. "We don't believe in accepting blood for transfusions but when it comes to having a blood test we have no objections. We have no problem with blood tests for medical purposes," Price said.

He said he would write to SOCOG telling Vance that Jehovah's witnesses would not object to blood testing.

UCI is leading the way because of the escalating problem of EPO, a drug which provides increased endurance by increasing the levels of red blood cells in the body and is applicable to other endurance sports.

The downside of the drug is the blood becomes too thick for the heart to pump around the body, arteries clog and heart attacks occur. The deaths of an estimated 20 riders have been linked to the drug.

While medical experts have praised UCI's commitment, the body's approach has concerned some in the sport.

Tests measure the amount of EPO in the blood stream — a haematocrit level — but are unable to differentiate between amounts of EPO occurring naturally and those added through drug taking.

UCI set the haematocrit level at 50 but Australian sports scientists believe it should be raised to 52 for men and lowered for women.

Tests are taken before racing and if the cyclists have a count above 50 it is considered dangerous and

they are withdrawn. Because levels above 50 are possible without drug taking, a withdrawal is not an accusation of wrongdoing.

Australian track team doctor Peter Barnes praised UCI but said the possibility of legal action against a withdrawn should be considered.

"Let's say someone is prevented from winning a medal because he isn't allowed to compete after taking this test," Barnes said.

"A rider could well have a natural level above what they have set for this test," Barnes said.

Barnes said the average range of haematocrit in men was 42-52 and 37-47 in women.

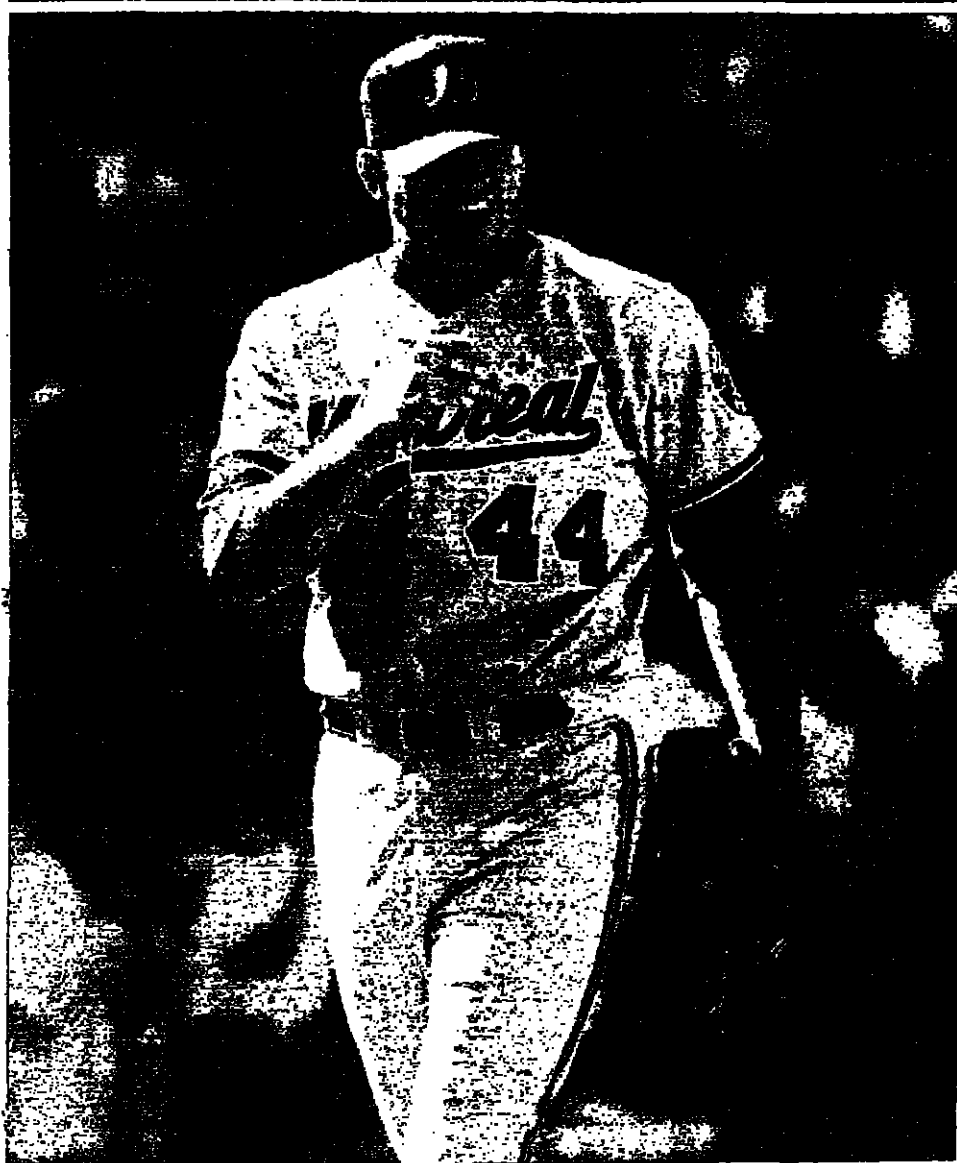
"They're saying it's unsafe for your health to be above 50 and that's where they lose credibility in the medical community," Barnes said.

"We've had three or four riders in the Australian squad who have gone above 50 at various stages."

"Your haematocrit is not consistent, there can be great variations."

Cyclists able to show evidence of consistent racing above the 50 level would be allowed to compete, Barnes said.

He said the fact the level of 50 applied to both men and women "basically shows they haven't done the research on females."



Montreal Expos' reliever Steve Kline reacts after giving up a two-run home run to the Chicago Cubs' Sammy Sosa in the seventh inning of game in Chicago's Wrigley Field. Sosa had all three RBIs in the Cubs' 3-1 win (Reuters photo)

### GOREN BRIDGE

WITH CHAIR SHARIF  
A TANNAN HIRSCH

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**HELP PARTNER OUT**

Both vulnerable. South deals.

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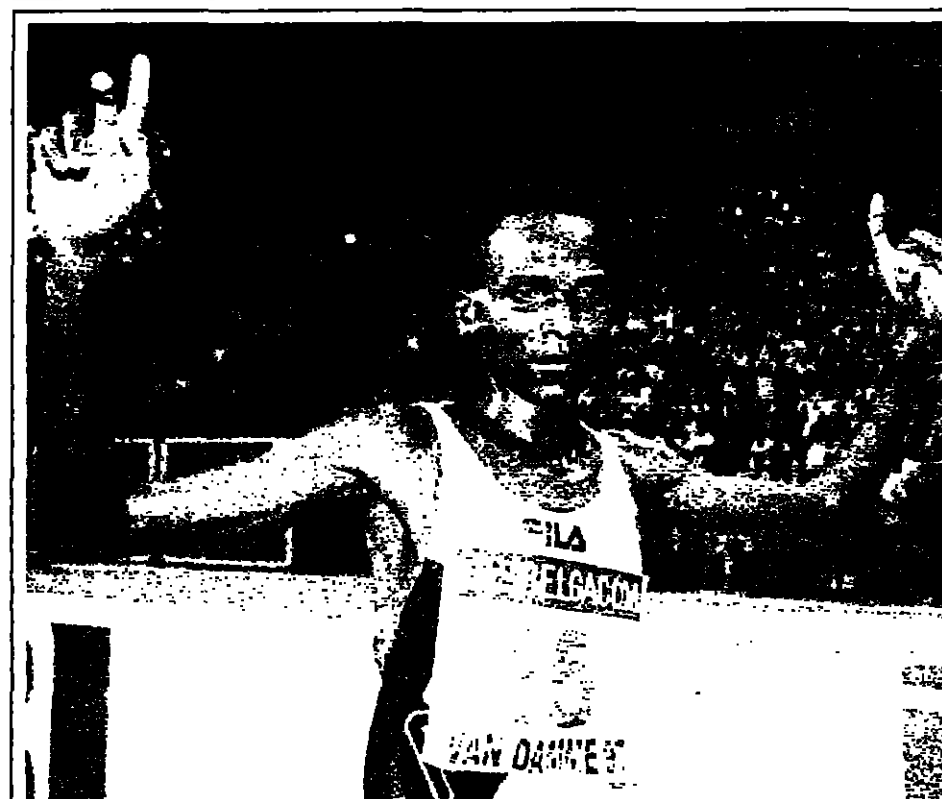
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Opening lead: Five of ♠

What is the mark of a good defender? It is a player who makes life easy for partner. This deal from the Fall North American Championships was reported by Barry Rigel.

Normally, a no trump opening bidder should pass when partner

**JORDAN TIMES**  
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Paul Tergat of Kenya raises his hands in celebration after he set a new world record time of 26:27.85 in the men's 10,000 metres event at the Brussels Grand Prix athletics meeting. Tergat beat the 26:31.32 record by Haile Gebrselassie of Ethiopia (Reuters photo)

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### Sprinter Privalova resumes training

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia's four-times world champion sprinter Irina Privalova, recovering from a thigh injury, will miss the rest of the season it was confirmed here on Saturday. Although the 28-year-old Privalova, who underwent surgery for a torn thigh muscle in April, is back in training, she is far from her top form said her coach Vladimir Parashuk. "The main thing is that she is not in pain while running," he added. Privalova is expected to be ready for the winter indoor season.

### Romario out for seven weeks

VALENCIA (AFP) — Brazilian striker Romario will be out for seven weeks after suffering a groin strain playing for Valencia against his old club Flamengo in a friendly on Friday. Romario scored his side's only goal in their 3-1 defeat.

### Segers joins Wolves

WOLVERHAMPTON (AFP) — Former Wimbledon goalkeeper Hans Segers has joined Wolves on a one-year deal. Dutchman Segers, cleared of match-fixing charges in court earlier this month, will provide back-up at the First Division promotion hopefuls to Mike Stowell. Meanwhile Wolves manager Mark McGhee has admitted defeat in his bid to sign Aston Villa midfielder Sasa Curcic. "He is out of our price range," said McGhee.

### FOR SALE

Mercedes German registered car. Model June 1993 "E 320" Full options, automatic, silver metallic colour, centre lock, electric corner mirrors, coloured electric shield, air-conditioned, type A.B.S. aluminium wheel covers, roof opening airbrake, in an excellent condition.

For more details please call Tel: 997484 - Mr. Jamil

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### Two Furnished Apartments In Western Shmeisani For Rent

The first is 200 sq.m. independent first floor apartment consisting of two bedrooms, guest room, sitting room, dining, glassed-in veranda, garden, garage.

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2 Furnished apartments located at 3rd circle Jabal Amman.

A - With garden, 1-2 bedrooms.

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For more details call Tel. 641940  
or 641941 before 1:00 p.m.



### Y.W.C.A./Amman CHOIR SINGING

The Y.W.C.A. in Amman takes pleasure in inviting amateur/professional male & female singers to join its 4-voice choir in preparation for its Annual Christmas Concert that will be held December 3rd, 4th, 6th & 7th/97.

The programme includes classical pieces and traditional carols. Auditions for singers will be held at the Y.W.C.A. hall, 3rd Circle on every Tuesdays and Wednesdays from Tuesday 26th of August till Wednesday the 10th of September from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Rehearsals for whole choir will be every Tuesday starting from Tuesday 26th of August at 7:30 p.m. Extra rehearsals for those who need it will be on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.

For inquiries please call the Y.W.C.A. on telephones 641119-641793 between 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 3-6 p.m. except Sundays & Fridays



## Iran's new government starts work as woman appointed vice president

TEHRAN (AFP) — The new government of moderate Iranian President Mohammad Khatami went to work Saturday, naming a woman as vice president for the first time since the 1979 Islamic revolution and ridding bureaucrats of their "pompous titles."

After winning parliamentary approval Wednesday for his cabinet, Mr. Khatami got down to business and appointed Massoumeh Ebtekar, 36, a former journalist and professor, as vice president in charge of environmental protection, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported.

Mr. Khatami owes a large part of his stunning landslide victory over a conservative rival in May elections to the support of women seeking social and economic reform in the Islamic Republic.

Setting the new tone for his government, Mr. Khatami on Saturday urged all state employees to ditch pompous and kow-towing titles when referring to him and his cabinet, telling them to use the simple adjective "respectable."

"The president believes that in the Islamic Republic of Iran, official letters should be stripped of all pompous formulas and kow-towing titles," said a

presidential statement.

Mr. Khatami's predecessor Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani gave himself the title "The Commander of Reconstruction" and Iranian leaders dating back to the U.S.-backed Shah have embellished themselves with titles.

Iran's new trade minister also took action to boost the country's faltering economy, vowing to halt a slump in the Persian carpet industry after two years of dramatically falling profits. "We must revise laws governing exports, relaunch Persian carpets on the international market and lift legal obstacles so we can solve problems" in the industry, Mohammad Shariatmadari said as he opened a week-long carpet fair in Tehran.

Mr. Shariatmadari, quoted by state television, said he would draw up a strategy to promote carpet exports, the country's second largest source of revenue after oil.

The U.S. and European Union (EU) were also looking for signs of change in Iranian foreign policy towards a possible rapprochement after accusing Tehran of supporting international terrorism and seeking to build nuclear weapons.

But barely after being approved Wednesday by a surprisingly large majority in the staunchly conservative parliament, the government was warned of "the limits" to its actions.

"Non-alignment and a firm line is an unyielding principle of the Islamic Republic," said Ayatollah Ahmad Janati, imam of Muslim prayers in Tehran and member of the influential and conservative Iranian constitutional council.

During Friday prayers, Ayatollah Janati said that "founding principles" of the government "do not change with the change of cabinet."

The conservative Shiite Muslim clergy, which dominated Iran's government before Mr. Khatami's shock victory in May, have also warned against the new president's reform programme, including more civil liberties and the rule of law. "The defence of Islam, Islamic principles and the revolution is a stable policy and will be respected no matter which faction is in power," said Ayatollah Janati, who is close to Iran's supreme religious and political leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Mr. Khatami does, however, have a strong popular mandate for his reform-

minded agenda after the biggest voter turnout here since the 1979 Islamic revolution toppled the U.S.-backed Shah.

This may explain why the conservative parliament, despite its strong reservations over several moderate cabinet nominees, overwhelmingly approved the new government to avoid a direct confrontation with Mr. Khatami for the time being, observers said.

The new cabinet contains a number of relatively young and moderate technocrats close to the new president and new faces in the key posts of foreign minister and oil minister.

There have already been some encouraging signs in a possible rapprochement with the West, as the foreign ministry called on the United States to show its peaceful intentions.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel also hailed the Mr. Khatami government as a new start in the strained relationship between the European Union and Iran.

Relations between the EU and Tehran soured after EU members recalled their ambassadors when a Berlin court ruled in April that top Iranian leaders were linked to the 1992 murder of four Kurdish-Iranian dissidents in the German capital.

## Turkey says emergency rule gone by next year

ANKARA (R) — Turkey will abolish the emergency rule in force in the mainly Kurdish southeast by early next year, Deputy Prime Minister Ismet Sezgin said Saturday.

"Emergency rule will be lifted either at the end of this year or at the start of 1998," the Anatolia news agency quoted Mr. Sezgin as saying.

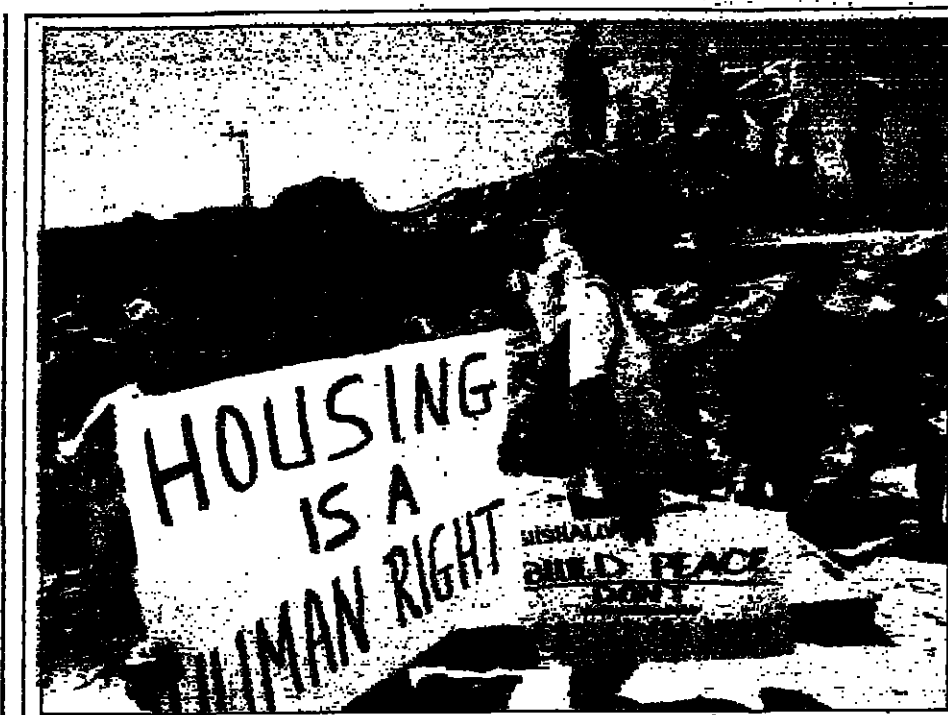
Emergency rule, one step short of martial law, has been in force in nine southeastern provinces since 1987, giving police and soldiers extensive powers of arrest and detention in their fight against an insurgency by Kurdish guerrillas in the region.

Emergency rule would be discussed at the next meeting of the influential military-dominated national security council on August 27. Milliyet newspaper reported Saturday. Any proposal to lift emergency rule would effectively require the backing of the council.

An Iranian women's group extended the invitation to the Americans who include at least five well-known academics active in public life, said the sources who refused to be identified.

The U.S. group would stay in the Islamic Republic from August 29 to September 4 and hold talks with Iranian women on "humanitarian issues, women and children," the sources said.

They would also meet government officials and diplo-



PROTESTING TOGETHER: Israeli peace activists join Palestinian protesters, Saturday, in a demonstration against Israeli government policy of demolishing Palestinian homes in the West Bank village of Qalaneh. In the background is a demolished Palestinian house (Reuters photo)



CHILDREN AT ADULT ACTION: Palestinian youths push a burning tyre during unrest in Bethlehem Saturday. Some 300 Palestinians protested against what they called internal closure that Israel has kept on Bethlehem even though it lifted the closures on other areas (See story on page 1) (Reuters photo)

## Iran invites Americans to make first visit since '80

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has invited a delegation of high-profile U.S. women to visit for the first time since Washington and Tehran broke ties in 1980, well-informed sources in Tehran said Saturday.

The Iranian women's group extended the invitation to the Americans who include at least five well-known academics active in public life, said the sources who refused to be identified.

The U.S. group would stay in the Islamic Republic from August 29 to September 4 and hold talks with Iranian women on "humanitarian issues, women and children," the sources said.

They would also meet government officials and diplo-

mats from North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member states in Tehran.

The Iranian Women's Solidarity Association, which is close to the government, is trying to organise the trip.

It would be the first time a delegation of American women holding official positions have been invited to Iran for 17 years.

The U.S. broke diplomatic relations with Iran in April 1980 after Islamic militant students took hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran, triggering a 14-month crisis that humiliated Washington.

However, Washington described the election in May of moderate cleric Mohammad Khatami as

Iran's new president as an "intriguing" development that could herald a thaw in relations between the two foes.

An Iranian official urged the U.S. on Thursday to change its attitude towards the Islamic Republic.

"If the United States has no intention of continuing hostilities against the Iranian people, it must prove its political desire and change its attitude toward Iran," foreign ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi said.

He also said Tehran was able to make the distinction between the U.S. public and their government, and called on Washington to do likewise.

## President Clinton remains silent, cool on Paula Jones sex scandal

MARTHA'S VINEYARD (AFP) — President Bill Clinton, on vacation off the New England coast, on Saturday was keeping his cool — and his silence — about the latest setback in the Paula Jones' sexual harassment suit.

At the end of the first of three weeks of vacation on this resort island, Mr. Clinton was playing golf when in far-away Arkansas, U.S. District Court Judge Susan Webber Wright set May 26, 1998, as the trial date for Ms. Jones' suit.

Ms. Jones, 30, is accusing Mr. Clinton of requesting sexual favours from her in May 1991 when she was an Arkansas state employee and he was governor.

After his golf game, the president dropped by a night spot partly owned by singer Carly Simon to celebrate the 30th birthday of one of First Lady Hillary Clinton's assistants.

With one arm draped around Carly Simon's shoulders, the president was studiously relaxed as he headed to dinner with wife Hillary and family friends.

From the beginning of this case, the president has let his

lawyer, Robert Bennett, speak for him. On Friday, Mr. Bennett said he was "pleased" that Judge Wright dismissed a portion of Ms. Jones' suit in which she alleged Mr. Clinton had defamed her, and he called the trial date of May 26, 1998, "a good date."

"We want to get it over with as quick as we can," said Mr. Bennett. He refused to predict an out-of-court settlement, reiterating, "the president will not apologise and will not admit to events that did not occur."

But just setting a trial date was a setback for Mr. Clinton, who had asked that Jones' \$700,000 lawsuit be dismissed altogether. Ms. Wright also let stand the allegations that Mr. Clinton sexually harassed Ms. Jones and caused her emotional distress.

Ms. Jones' lawyers have amply demonstrated that they are willing to play hard ball with the White House, issuing subpoenas seeking other women whom Mr. Clinton may have propositioned.

They recently tried — and failed — to convince a former White House staffer to testify that Mr. Clinton

harassed her shortly after becoming president in 1993.

They have asked Washington Post reporter David Maraniss, who wrote of sexual indiscretions in his Clinton biography "First in His Class," and Betsy Wright, former top assistant to Mr. Clinton when he was governor of Arkansas, for the names of women, who may have had affairs with Mr. Clinton.

It is not clear, however, that Ms. Wright will permit second- and third-hand testimony in the trial to discover what really happened on May 8, 1991, at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Ms. Jones alleges that Mr. Clinton, who was effectively her boss, summoned her to his room, exposed himself and requested oral sex. Mr. Clinton has insisted that he cannot recall meeting Ms. Jones or making sexual advances toward her.

Whichever way the case is settled, it has already cost Mr. Clinton two million dollars in lawyers' fees. His sole consolation is that it had little effect on his 1996 reelection campaign and has not undermined his consistently good popularity polls.

## Another way of saying farewell!

GENOA (AFP) — An Italian couple caught making love in an automatic photo booth in Genoa's busy train station found police less than amused with their moment of passion. Despite closing the curtain as their love developed, the pair made so much noise and rattled the cramped booth so much that a crowd formed in a flash, prompting police to investigate. The 32-year-old man explained that, finding they had half an hour to kill before his 30-year-old female companion's train left, the two had decided to take advantage of the time to say proper farewells.

## Former employee leaves U.S. college a \$6.5 million gift

OXFORD, Ohio (R) — Arretha Cornell Sheriff, former student adviser who never earned more than \$10,000 a year, has left Miami University one of the largest gifts it has ever received — a bequest of \$6.5 million, the university said Saturday. The late Sheriff worked at the college from 1948 until 1962. She died two years ago at the age of 98 after living modestly in a retirement home for many years. Her bequest came with one string attached — that her name not be used. Georgia Silliman, a longtime friend of Sheriff, said that it came from her late husband's stock market investments.

## Critics less drawn to Reeves new singing career

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Keanu Reeves, better known for his acting in Hollywood movies, has put aside the silver screen in favour of the touring life with his rock 'n' roll band, Dogstar. Reeves, who starred in "Speed" and makes millions of dollars per movie, is enduring the travelling, fast food and little sleep on tour with vocalist Bret Dornrose and drummer Rob Malthouse. But while the band has pulled in fans, the critics have been less drawn to Reeves' musical stylings. "We're fighting this credibility factor," one told U.S. magazine.

## Gangsta Rap is drawing heavy criticism

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Death Row Records — the popular rap music label that boasts Snoop Doggy Dogg and the late Tupac Shakur — may be for sale, according to the Los Angeles Times. Now part of Interscope Records, the label's future was clouded by the nine-year jail sentence last November of co-founder Marion "Suge" Knight, 31, for parole violation. He was also barred from daily involvement in the record label. Seagram, which owns half of Interscope, has been pressuring the company to drop Death Row over concerns the label's so-called Gangsta Rap — whose lyrics glorify violence at abuse of women — was drawing heavy criticism according to the Times.

## Train drivers wreathed in marijuana fumes

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African train drivers have appealed for action from clouds of marijuana smoke wafting in passenger compartments and the country's corporation is probing the problem. "The drivers are complaining for while about drug use, but seems to be worse," said a spokeswoman at the South African Railways Corporation.



MAYBE A MODEL, MAYBE NOT: Lebanese Cynthia Gharib (centre), winner of Miss Elite 1997 Look contest, raises her trophy late Friday at the destroyed city centre of Beirut. Christine Hajal (left) 2nd runner-up and Zeina Doumet (right) 1st runner up surround the winner. The International Elite Model Agency stages an annual competition in Beirut for potential models (AFP photo)